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## REMARKS.

Man suffers want in a world of exhaustless resources. Must this be so? No. It is so because we stupidly violate the most fundamental principle of social justice. Man's stupidity has done it; and man's reflection must undo it.

The cause lies at the very foundation of our economic or industrial system; and the remedy is the removal of the cause. The remedy is simple, but effective; radical, but true; injustice to none, but justice to all.

The road to reform is the ballot, the most sacred social institution man ever devised. If the ballot cannot secure reform, then the ballot must itself be reformed first of all. Prejudice and blind vehemence can avail nothing. Much less can apathy and stupid indifference reform things. An intelligent ballot only can do it. But it must be an intelligent ballot—a ballot directed by honest thought and calm reflection; where principles are considered first, men second and parties last; where party fanaticism is not mistaken for patriotism; where our judgments are not warped by bigotry and prejudice; and where the supreme purpose is to follow truth and do justice. Parties, in the true sense, are a necessary consequence and serve a necessary purpose at the polls. But when they become organized machines to be controlled by politicians, office-seekers and demogogues, who are thus enabled, encouraged and too often induced, to make such parties the instruments for advancing their own selfish interests, thwarting the popular will by deception and misrepresentation at the sacrifice of duty and true patriotism, corrupting and biasing public thought

by the practice of degraded methods and arousing and fostering public hatreds and prejudices, trafficing in offices, gambling for profit, and making 'practical politics' a business, then they become an unmitigated nuisance, a gigantic fraud. If such things do exist, as everyone knows they do, then our system of voting is at fault, and not our parties, much less our politicians; for parties and men are just what our institutions make of them. Bad men sometimes make good institutions, but bad institutions always make bad men. The principle of voting is a good one, but our system is defective. The tendency is for parties to become mere office-fishing machines and for voters to become the stupid dupes of their operators. This should not be. There is a way of conducting the ballot that will reverse this tendency and impel voters to think, to love justice more than parties, to vote for principles rather than for prejudices, to adhere to reason instead of foolish dogmas, to forget traditional hatreds and revive the spirit of Christian charity, to abolish antediluvian methods, and to promote the march of eternal human progress.

Not to treat this subject at length, let it only be noted here that, aside from the evil which we propose to consider, the source and fountain-head of all political corruption lies in our primary elections and conventions, which are nothing, under present methods, but tribunals run by machines and those seeking offices, positions, public contracts, bribes and other benefits. Only a very small fraction of the voters attend the primaries, while the conventions resulting from them are entirely outside of their control—leaving for the people nothing to do except to vote for what they imagine to be the least unjust nominations and principles of two or more machine conventions The results are most deplorable, and sometimes shocking. The convention and caucus system must be abolished. The people must nominate and vote on public questions directly at the regular elections; for every function of government that can be operated by

the people should be operated by the people, and such institutions as a college of electors to choose a president, a legislature to choose a senator, and a convention to instruct the people for whom and for what principles to vote, are not only unnecessary, but they insult popular intelligence by implying that some men know more than all men—that the many must do the bidding of the few.

One election is sufficient. Let the ballots be official and all printed alike, with a blank line instead of a party caption at the head of each for the voter to write the name of his party or principle, and a blank line after each title of office for the voter to write the name of his own choice. Every public question should also be printed on the ballots and voted upon, so that whatever a majority shall desire may be legally enacted by appropriate subsequent processes. In counting, the ballots may be separated according to parties and the number of votes cast for each party be ascertained, after which the votes for all persons for the various offices may be counted and listed for each party separately. From all these lists of all the various election districts the nominations of each party can be ascertained by pluralities, from constable up to the president of the United States, and the nominees of the party receiving the highest number of votes should be declared elected.

This would put all political machinery completely and directly in the hands of the people and leave no chance for politicians and wire-pullers to force themselves and their schemes upon the public without the voice of the people; because it would enable the people to nominate and vote upon all public questions directly, and thus deprive the machines of their power in the primaries, which could then exist without conventions or opportunities for corruption. But if primaries be still continued, they should be held for all parties at the same polls and at the same time just as are the regular elections; for their present semi-private character disinterests and even repels the voters. They do

not show the comparative strength of parties, and are held for each party separate. Primaries now decide both issues and candidates, but with the masses of the voters not even realizing that they are held at all, much less participating in them, thus enabling office-seekers to do about as they please—and they generally do it. Here is the source of political corruption; here is where the public is unguarded, but where safeguards are needed most.

Every phase of the ballot must be legally prescribed and protected, or the tendency must be toward government by the few and oppression of the many. With the ballot only half legalized democracy will become plutocracy.

Things are not right merely because they bear the seal of fashion. This is a world of change, where progress never ends, and where perfection is unknown. What the last generation held sacred is despised by ours; what was yesterday thought just is a crime to-day. For ages kings had 'divine rights;' to-day those rights are the divine rights of man on half the earth, and to-morrow it will be so in all the world. Slavery was once a 'divine institution;' but slavery is no more. Once God gave special rights to some; but now He gives equal rights to all. Until a few centuries ago insane persons were possessed by devils and spirits, and punished as criminals; at present insanity is a disease. Once the sun moved about the earth; now the earth swings round the sun. Once the earth constituted the bulk and was the center of creation; now it is the merest mote—an insignificant speck. Once the world was flat; to-day it is round. Compared with Americans and Europeans the natives of Africa are barbarous; but compared with the civilization of the future ours is savagery. Back of us hang the clouds of superstition, war and ruin; threatening us are the hatreds, prejudices and delusions transcended from them; but before us, through the mists of all, we see the bright star of hope. Man has at last begun to think; the world has become a world of reflection and investigation.

As changes have been made in the past in the midst of superstition and bigotry, so are changes being less slowly and more surely wrought in our advanced age. And so must it ever be. We cannot advance unless we change, and the extent and number of changes are the measure of enlightenment. Let no man think that improvement is impossible, for that is proof of his being an intellectual fossil. Such men are the world's dregs, the foes of truth and justice, the haters of freedom, the slum through which progress must wind its weary way. When did a reform ever come without opposition from even sincere and thinking men? and in the very nature of things how can a reform come otherwise? Every new idea, whether right or wrong, is opposed by all at first, and by many to the end. Established systems and customs are naturally and justly adhered to by society's best friends until those proposed to displace and succeed them are thoroughly studied and found better. We should ever watch with suspicious eye every movement for a change or innovation lest it be a fraud; but over and above all we should carefully and honestly study and reflect over the same lest it be or contains truth. We must never trust current gossip; we must search for the facts, or we cannot find them; we must investigate, or we must be deluded; we must think, unless we choose to be fools.

Our glorious Republic, the grandest system of government the world has ever known, is yet full of defects. We have led the world for over a century, but we can continue to lead only if we continue to advance at an accelerate rate. In the midst of prosperity, wealth and magnificance we see involuntary destitution and crime. We have aristocracy; but we also have 'trampocracy.' We have schools and colleges; but we also have jails and prison dungeons. For every person of leisure and comfort we have scores of hard and unceasing toilers. For every mansion we have a hundred squalid huts. For every millionaire we have a thousand miserable men seeking and unable to find employment.

Our liberties are marred by oppression, and our Christianity is polluted with silly dogmas and vile prejudices. We are tending, not toward equality, but toward inequality. We are rapidly approaching the condition where the earth will be owned by a few and starvation must be the only hope of the masses.

With every invention and every advance in the methods of production does want seem to increase and labor to become less profitable. The marvelous improvements in machinery and all the various appliances for production have within the last fifty years increased the power of labor more than twenty-fold—in many instances more than a hundred-fold—but have they increased the reward of labor one cent? and have they made it any easier to secure employment? 'Learned' men frequently say yes; but plain, practical, common-sense people of actual experience nearly always say no. But supposing wages have increased, have they become twenty times as great as they were fifty years ago? and is employment twenty times as easily obtained? If not, then there is manifestly something very wrong. It is doubtful whether actual wages (i. e. purchase power) or the ease to secure employment have increased at all, and only a fool can say that they have increased anything like proportionately to the increase of productive power. And let us not imagine that capital gets labor's share, for the return to capital is no greater than that of labor. Neither is the small return to labor and capital due to a necessary or actual waste or drain in constructing and maintaining machinery, etc.; for the cost of these elements is a mere trifle compared with their results But this vast increase of wealth produced by labor and capital does go somewhere, and evidently where it should not go. There is a great leak somewhere, and not until we find it can we find the true remedy.

Poverty on the part of the poor and fear of poverty on the part of the rich are steadily increasing, and, more than

all other influences combined, lead to selfishness, greed and crime among all. The true remedy must make it possible for all able and willing workers to obtain employment at all times and at fair wages. This would stop involuntary poverty, make the hardest toilers the richest, confer upon genius its highest reward, and leave only those who will not work go hungry. It would make fear of want unknown, and thus remove the chief temptation for lieing, deception and fraud. It would make men better as well as richer.

Hence, this is a moral problem as well as an economic problem. Ay, the world can never be 'Christianized' until it is solved. Creed patriotism and hatred of those who do not believe as we do is not Christianity—it is the vilest state of religious bigotry and can be entertained only by minds that are completely divested of every sense of magnanimity and fairness. The cultivation of prejudices and predilections cannot lead men to truth, but must keep them far from it. Yet, truth alone can make men good; but no man can find it and realize it save by dispelling all such feelings and thinking for himself. To make men good we need only tolerate and respect their individual opinions as well as our own and give them time and opportunity to think.

Men are bad because they do not think, and they do not think because they have not time—the poor are haunted by the thought of want and the rich by the greed for more. Give men an easier way of making a living and they will take more time to think and become better, nobler and more worthy beings. Giving men opportunities to be good is the best way to make them good. Persuasion will only make fools, for fools only can be persuaded. Men must make themselves better, and they can do it only by thinking for themselves. They must be enabled to find leisure and relief from the strain of the thought and fear of want, must cultivate their mental faculties, must learn to know themselves, must see and realize the true meaning of

truth, must follow the dictates of their own individual convictions instead of trusting bigotry and custom. Let us have faith in our own sense of justice, but doubt all theories of man. Let every man trust his own god who speaks to his own soul through his own brain. Then, and not till then, will he be a Christian.

Men commit crime because they possess false ideas of real justice. In other words, ignorance is the cause of crime. But men are most ignorant when they suffer the worst social conditions, and least ignorant when they enjoy the best. Injustice produces ignorance, and ignorance produces crime. Let us establish social justice, and crime will disappear. There is something in our economic system that drives men to prison dens and suicide graves. Our laws make criminals.

## ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES.

Political Economy is the science of the laws of the:

1. **Production of Wealth.**
2. **Distribution of Wealth.**

The business or economic world is a world of production and distribution of wealth. All men are or should be engaged in the same, since life, liberty and happiness depend upon our ability to produce and secure wealth. Without wealth we cannot live. We may inherit or beg it; otherwise we must produce it, steal it, or die. But no one should live by the labor of others. Everyone who is able to work should work; for nothing is more honorable than honest toil.

The problems of the production and distribution of wealth are accordingly the great problems of man; and since it is through government and the ballot alone that they must be solved and applied, if government is a proper agency, it is manifestly most important indeed that every voter shall study and understand the same. Production and distribution are the subjects of the labor problem, and the labor problem is the problem of the hour.

Unfortunately some of the most fundamental principles of this great science were not fully recognized by its illustrious founder; and accordingly did he not only fail to fully or clearly unfold them, but he was led into a fatal error. So great, however, was the confidence in his fundamental conclusions that few of his successors or subsequent writers on economics thought it worth while to doubt the propriety of the same; and none, until recently, were fortunate enough to reinvestigate or bold enough to thoroughly

and clearly present his blunder. Wherever men wander from truth do and must they differ in opinion; and this is why they wrangle and form so many and such conflicting theories on economic laws. Hence the positive necessity of trusting no doctrines, but of every man investigating and thinking for himself.

Much confusion also arises from the indefinite meaning given important terms, and using the same terms in different senses. This must be avoided in exact reasoning, or it will be impossible to understand even ourselves, much less to make ourselves understood by others. Let us, then, give each of such terms a suitable and precise scientific meaning and use the same in no other sense at any time.

## PRODUCTION OF WEALTH.

**Land.**—The earth, the land, is labor's store-house and work-shop. From it alone can we obtain the materials and opportunities to provide ourselves with food, clothing and shelter, and all things that toil can give us for comfort and pleasure. Land is the source of all wealth. Without it there can be no opportunities to work, no production of wealth, no way of avoiding starvation. By the term 'land' we mean all natural resources or opportunities, whether mines or forests, plains or mountains, lakes or rivers, seas or oceans. 'Land' means all natural opportunities to produce the necessaries and comforts of life.

**Labor.**—But land in itself can produce no wealth; for nothing is wealth in the economic sense until human energy has been conferred upon it. Fruits that grow wild are not wealth until human energy has gathered them, and the fish in the sea are not wealth until human energy has drawn them out of the water. No wealth can be produced without human energy. Human energy is as indispensible in production as is land. Human energy and land produce all wealth. Let us call human energy devoted to production

'Productive Human Energy,' including brain energy as well as muscular energy Now, all productive human energy which is yet to be exerted, and none that is already exerted, is 'Labor.' Labor, therefore, is a factor existing in man's mental and physical capacity only.

**Capital.**—But no sooner is productive human energy expended than it ceases to be labor and becomes wealth. Land and productive human energy produce wealth, but all wealth intended to assist labor in the future is 'Capital.' Hence, being an assistant of labor, capital becomes itself a factor in production. But, unlike land, it is an artificial and not a natural force—it is produced by labor, by human energy, and is accordingly nothing but human energy in a different form from that called labor. Labor is productive human energy yet to be exerted, while capital is the same already exerted. Capital is productive human energy stored-up, so to speak, in objects derived from land and intended to assist labor—wealth that is not intended to assist labor being not capital, but wealth merely.

*Land, labor and capital are the factors of production.* In all the wide world of industry there are and can be no other factors that can assist in production. But before we pass beyond the discussion of what these factors really are let us be sure that we possess a full and clear realization of their import, and then never attribute to any of them any other sense or meaning.

There is no difficulty in ascertaining the exact meaning of the terms 'land' and 'labor,' as used in political economy. Land means all natural elements and forces of nature outside of man which enter into the production of wealth—land means natural opportunities to produce wealth. Labor is the mental and physical power of man to produce wealth when applied to land—that is to natural opportunities. It is always an unexpended force; for as soon as it is exerted it becomes economic wealth.

But it is not so with capital; because not all wealth is

capital. We must distinguish between wealth that is and wealth that is not capital, and this is a problem which has not yet been thoroughly and clearly solved. The definition given on the preceding page and in what follows seems not only the most scientific and appropriate, but is that which modern views seem to most generally accept.

Laborers can always accomplish more in the end by devoting a part of their energy or labor in making tools, machines, appliances, fixtures, factories and so forth, to assist their future labor. Hence, besides using our brains and muscles in production we also use these things, which are productive human energy already exerted and called capital.

All wealth by the use or keeping of which we expect to become richer or increase our wealth is capital, while all other wealth is wealth merely. The clothes men keep in their stores for sale are capital; but the clothes they wear or intend to wear are not. Pianos, furniture and carpets kept for sale are capital; but those in our homes are not. The house you keep for sale or to lease is capital; but the one you live in or intend to live in is not. Your farm is capital; all your barns, wells, ditches, fences, orchards, crops, cattle, sheep, machines, tools and implements, are capital, since you use them to create wealth. But the house you live in, your horse and carriage used for pleasure riding, your watch and piano, and all things which you have devoted to your own personal enjoyment, are not capital, since they are withdrawn from industry and production and no longer concern economics or business—they are wealth merely. Wealth that is capital may at any time cease to be capital—that is, when it is consigned to personal enjoyment and therefore withdrawn from production. And just so may wealth that is not capital become capital—that is, if for any reason you conclude to sell or exchange any of the articles which you had consigned to your personal comfort only. All wealth or commodities of production are

capital until they are no lunger to be exchanged or used in production. Wealth that is not capital does not concern political economy, since it is no factor in production.

Money is not capital unless it contains an intrinsic value in itself, and then it is capital only to the extent of such value. Notes, checks, bonds and mortgages are not capital in any sense. They guarantee capital to their owners—they represent capital, and are merely evidences of debts. Money is a medium of exchange—a measure of values—and as such it does not need to embrace any value in itself. Capital is real wealth in the course of exchange.

The meaning of the words 'wealth' and 'value' might perhaps have been considered to greater advantage at the outset, since political economy treats only of wealth or values and their production and distribution. Wealth and value mean exactly the same thing. But we speak of the products of labor as containing values, or as being wealth. We say, 'the value of productions,' and, 'the wealth of men.' The total values of all the products of labor belonging to a man constitute his wealth. Wealth is collected values, and can exist only as the result of labor applied to land. Men sometimes speak of natural things, untouched by human energy, as being wealth or having values; but that sense is never given those words in political economy, which is not concerned in natural things, but only in the results of labor applied to natural things. A forrest that has been planted and cultivated is wealth to the extent of such labor conferred upon it, while a much better forrest that was never touched by human hand is not wealth at all. A natural forrest or opportunity of any kind may be of incalculable advantage to its owner, and may enable him to make great fortunes with little labor, but it is not economic wealth. On the other hand an almost worthless patch of ground is wealth if labor has been spent upon it—unless, of course, such labor was spent unprofitably or its results were swept away. The best as well as the poorest natural opportunity

can be wealth or have economic value only after labor has been spent on it, and then only to the extent of such labor. Economic wealth or value is exerted labor.

The methods of producing wealth or values are most varied and intricate indeed. To ascertain all of them is impossible, and to state half of them would require many volumes. Whatever is done to cause value in a hitherto valueless object, or an increase of value in an object already made valuable by previous labor, is true production.

The lumberman chops down a tree; the teamster hauls it to a mill; the sawmill man saws it into boards; the lumber merchant stores it away to dry and for safety; the railroad man transports it to a planing mill; the planing mill man planes it; the lumber agent takes charge and delivers it to a manufacturer; the manufacturer uses it to make a harvesting machine; the dealer in agricultural implements stores and keeps it in readiness for farmers to examine and purchase whenever needed; and finally the farmer takes it to cut his grain. Each party mentioned gave value to the lumber, and each was a producer of values or wealth, for every successive step taken was a necessary step requiring necessary labor and capital applied to land. The lumberman's ax was his capital, his energy expended his labor, and the ground and tree his land. In a similar manner will it be seen that each of the others employed land, labor and capital. Each successively gave it additional value, and each was a legitimate producer.

Of course, nearly every one of these divisions of labor is subdivided, and some re-subdivided perhaps again and again. In the making of the harvesting machine iron and other metals were also required, in the production of which there are still greater divisions and subdivisions of labor. Now, what is true of the production of harvesting machines is equally true of the production of nearly all of the countless thousands of commodities produced by man. It is impossible to enumerate all the different ways by which val-

ues are created and caused to be created. And this almost indefinite division and subdivision of labor is of very great advantage in every respect. Labor thus becomes far more profitable and efficient. There are very few articles produced that do not require the passage through very many or an almost countless number of hands.

But there are five general ways in which values are produced, namely:

1. Modifying objects derived from land.
2. Transporting such objects.
3. Storing such objects.
4. Displaying such objects.
5. Augmenting the volume and efficiency of labor.

Modification (the first) enters into the production of nearly all commodities. In the case of the harvesting machine already mentioned a great many successive modifications of objects were required before the machine was finished. The first value was given the wood by the man who fell the tree; the man who sawed it into boards increased its value; the planer again increased its value; and the manufacturer once more increased its value.

Transportation (the second) is indeed a most important element of production. Hauling the tree just mentioned to the mill gave it value and was production as truly as was the sawing of it into boards. Conveying the boards to the merchant's yards, and later transporting them to the planing mill, and then again to the manufacturer, each in turn gave it additional value, and each was in the truest sense production of wealth. When the machine was finished it was shipped to a distant town, and this once more gave it value, since it was worth more at said distant town than at the factory.

Storage (the third) is also an important and necessary element. After every successive modification or transportation an object must be sheltered and preserved from the destructive influences. The lumber merchant and agent

before mentioned each gave additional value to the wood by storing and protecting it until needed by the planing mill man and manufacturer respectively. Storage necessarily constitutes a very large part of production.

The fourth, or displaying and advertising goods, is as necessary as any other part of production, although it is true that at present there is much labor needlessly wasted in this branch of industry. People desire to see goods and know what they are before they will exchange for the same; and, accordingly, the placing and keeping of goods where they can be conveniently seen and examined, and making known their existence, merits, values, and how they may be secured, constitute a perfectly legitimate and necessary part of production. It takes labor to do the same, and goods are more valuable when made familiar to people and placed within their easy reach. Hence, values are created in this manner as truly as in any other.

The fifth, called personal services, is an element which does not produce wealth directly, but does produce wealth indirectly and is, therefore, true production in every sense of the word. Any person who does something which enables another person to produce more than he could otherwise produce is a real and true producer of wealth. The teacher enables parents to devote their time to production instead of teaching their children—so far as the teacher's work goes. The doctor in preventing and curing diseases and directing the preservation of health by his superior and special skill enables others to do more work and is a true producer of wealth. The same is true of lawyers and all those engaged in necessary professions and occupations which in any way augment the volume and efficiency of labor. Such professions as gambling, however, are neither necessary nor useful occupations. They neither produce nor enable others to produce wealth. They merely destroy and rob men of their wealth, and the gambler's services are demanded only by those who desire to do likewise.

What is true in this respect of the wood used in the harvesting machine is equally true of the metals used in the same; and what is true of the objects or materials used in the production of this machine is in a measure, either more or less, true of practically every other machine or commodity of any kind whatever. Production is creating values—no matter by what method or methods. Raising grain and stock or making boots and shoes is production just as much as but no more than is keeping store or exhibiting and advertising the products of industry—each is an essential occupation, and each gives value to the objects or products employed. And so is operating a telegraph or a telephone, conducting a school or a theater, or practiceing law or medicine, production as truly as is operating a railroad or running a steamboat. The latter create values by doing a necessary work—by changing the position or location of objects, whether modified or not, whether raw or finished or partly finished—but the telegrapher, teacher, actor, lawyer, and doctor, each does an equally necessary work, not creating values directly, but enabling others to do so, thus, each being a true and real producer of wealth in every sense of the word.

Let it be remembered, however, that, no matter how or in what manner value or wealth is produced, there are and can be only three factors of production, namely, land, labor and capital. These three produce *all* wealth. Sometimes wealth is produced by land and labor only. Wealth can be produced to a small extent without capital, but never without both land and labor. Land and labor are both absolutely necessary in the production of everything. There can be no wealth without labor, and there can be no wealth without objects or elements of nature—land.

Let it also be clearly understood and remembered that land is *natural opportunities*, and that labor and capital are the same thing in different forms—both are *productive human energy*, which, previous to its exertion is called

labor, and after such exertion wealth—that part of wealth which is intended to assist in future production being called capital. Capital is only stored-up labor, so to speak. Hence, capital and labor must be governed by the same laws, must have the same interests, and might be called by the same name and treated as one factor.

### DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH.

We have now observed how wealth is produced, and by what it is produced. Our next step is to see how this wealth is distributed, and to whom it goes. This is a most important but not at all a difficult task—providing only the student will trust to his own plain common-sense, and not be guided by preconceived doctrines or influenced by prejudice. Let the reader doubt or question every assertion or explanation of any kind whatever, whether made in this discourse or by any other authority, until the same shall harmonize with every fact known to himself and be a real conviction of his own. Unless you will ultimately trust to the dictates of your real own judgment you cannot hope to know or to learn. He who *thinks*, not he who reads, is wise. One's wisdom is measured not so much by what he knows as by his capacity to think and learn. Let us admit our errors when we find them and rise above bigotry and partisanship. Let us be candid. Let us be free men in mind. Let each of us follow truth as we each individually see it. Let us do justice to our own consciences and our own selves by doing justice to mankind. If we shall find a defect in our economic or industrial system which causes strong men to want, loving mothers to weep, and children to shiver and die, let us be men; let us do our duty; let us not sleep while our sisters and brothers do suffer; let us do the only effective thing we can do, namely, cast an honest and intelligent ballot; let us wage the peaceful battle at the polls; and let us never tire or cease until victory shall have crowned our cause.

Every man is entitled to all that he produces. It may be one's moral duties to devote the results of his enterprise to certain purposes or for certain objects besides his own immediate pleasures or those of his relatives; but this is a matter over which he alone is to decide, and no law should oblige him to give up any part of it at any time or for any purpose—save, perhaps, if there be no other way to avoid an impending calamity; and in that case his loss should be made good. Under all ordinary circumstances it must be a crime for an individual to take any part of a man's honest toil, and a far greater crime for the state to take the same.

On the other hand, no man is entitled to anything that he does not produce, no matter what the circumstances may be, and it is as unjust for the public to empower any man or any class of men to keep anything that he or it does not produce as it is to take from men anything that they do produce; for, so long as there is more than one man living one cannot keep what he did not produce without robbing the other—even if neither produced the same, in which case it must of right belong to both equally. Of course it is not so with what men inherit or obtain by gifts or charity, which things justly belong to those receiving them, providing only they are obtained from rightful owners.

For the same reasons that individuals should receive all and only what they produce should the public receive all and only what the public, or all the people as a whole, produces. The public has not only a right to take what it produces, but it commits a crime if it does not do so, and a still greater crime when it takes from the honest toil of industrious individuals, while leaving its own product to be divided among a few, who are thus enabled not only to get rich whether they work or not, but to monopolize not only the earth itself, but all that the earth brings forth.

There can be nothing more manifest to the crudest sense of justice than that to every man belong the results of all and only his own toil, and that the same principle

applies to society or the state as well as to individuals. If we are not to admit this much, then indeed, may we find excuses for the prevailing misery and forced idleness, and fail to see a remedy. But the honest investigator who does admit it will be sure to find the cause and the cure if only he will pursue the subject through all its phases and to its logical conclusion. It is astonishing how many people are impressed with the idea that a thing is right because it is law or ancient custom. Even though they say differently at times, and seem to know better, they are yet unconsciously influenced and often positively governed by this foolish sentiment—it seems so hard to rise above fashion. Let us realize that we may find a law of the state which is in conflict with a law of nature; and let us in such event admit that the former is wrong and must be made to correspond with the latter—that natural law is the only just law—that human law is just only when it is natural law.

Since land, labor and capital produce all wealth, it is evident that the owners of land, the owners of labor, and the owners of capital must or should receive all wealth—the values of the use of land in production should go to the rightful owners of land, the values of labor expended in production should go to the laborers, and the values of the use of capital in production should go to the capitalists. Of this there can be no possible doubt—the only question being, 'Who are the rightful owners of these factors of production, land, labor and capital?' and this we are now to consider.

It is clear to all that the rightful owners of labor are those who possess the power to labor—a power that nearly every human being embraces; we can all work, either with brain or hand. Each man is the rightful owner of his own power to work, and is justly entitled to the full value of his labor expended in production.

The rightful owners of capital are those who obtain it by their own labor, by inheritance, or as gifts. There can

be no doubt of this, regarding the statement in the fullest and broadest sense. There can be no other just claim to any form of wealth, or to anything on earth, remembering too that inheritances and gifts from none but rightful owners can be just possessions. Of course the capital a man uses or gives for use in production is equivalent to so much labor—it is his past labor and justly entitles him to the full value of its use in production.

The value of the use of land in production likewise belongs to the rightful owners of land. But who are the rightful owners of land? Let us see.

In the course of my remarks questions will suggest themselves to the thinking reader; but these will be found answered somewhat later. For the present let the reader assume that they can be explained and made to harmonize with the principles previously ascertained or asserted; and when they are reached let him judge if such is the case or not. If not, he can then reject all that he assumed.

Capital is nothing but exerted labor, or the products of individual men, and, therefore, of right belongs to individual men—to those who produce the same. Labor is a power given by nature to individuals, and must, therefore, belong to individuals—everyone being entitled to all and only what nature gives him. Land is not the product of men, but of nature; and it is not, like labor, invested by nature in individuals, but in mankind. Nature says: 'The land belongs to you all; use it for the good and glory of all.' Land is the gift of nature to all men. It was here before we were born, and it will be here after we shall have bid farewell to earth. Yesterday it belonged to our ancestors, to-day it belongs to us, to-morrow it will belong to our posterity. But never did or can it belong to individuals, much less a class of individuals—it is and forever must be the property of all men equally. Kings and tyrants took the lands from the people to reward their petty lords and servants, and soon it became a custom of governments

(which in those days were little less than organizations of selfish and brutal tyrants to delude and oppress the people) to sell or give the land as private property to individuals for services or certain considerations — this system remaining or continuing in force as governments were being later reformed by the people as they became more and more intelligent and demanded more and more of their rights; so that even now, and even in nations having the best governments and the most enlightened people, this land system, which was originated by bloodshed and terrible injustice, is commonly regarded as proper, but merely because it is custom, because its origin is not understood, because no just system was suggested, because people have not yet fairly begun to think about it at all. Indeed, not only do the first principles of natural justice unmistakably indicate the fact that the land belongs to all men equally, but even our very instincts would show it if we were not accustomed to our system, as is the case everywhere among men who have not yet adopted civilived methods that include our barbarous land system.

But we look again. Since men cannot produce land, and can produce nothing without land, to deprive one of the right to land is to deprive him of the right to live! If all men are created equal, inasmuch as all men have equal rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, then all men must possess equal rights to the use of the earth, the land. Nothing can be more self-evident than this. Every human being, from the day he is born to that on which he dies, has an equal right with every other living human being to the use and enjoyment of nature's opportunities, the land. We may and do make and enforce laws depriving some of the right to live — by depriving them of their right to the use of land! And what should we expect as a consequence? Can we expect anything better than what we have — involuntary idleness, poverty, hunger, despair, death! The earth is sold! We must buy it or starve!

We have observed that the values created by capital or the use of capital belong and should go to the owners of such capital; that the values created by labor belong to the laborers; and that the values of the use of land belong to the owners of the land—to the public. Now, the return to capital for its use in production is called 'Interest;' the return to labor is called 'Wages;' and the return to the land owners for the use of land is called 'Rent.'

Whatever is paid for the use of machinery and houses, as well as for money, is interest, since all are capital or the title to capital; whatever is paid for labor of any kind is wages; and only what is paid for land or the use of land, exclusive of all improvements upon the same, is rent—improvements on land, whether fences, ditches, orchards, houses, sheds, barns, shops, stores, factories, or otherwise, being capital if concerned in production or exchange, and wealth merely if not, but never included in the meaning of the term 'land.' By 'land' we always mean all and *only* the natural earth, natural opportunities, natural power of land separate or apart from anything and all that man has put upon it or in any way connected with it, whether separable or inseparable. For example: A farm, the improvements on which would cost or are worth $5000, will sell for $8000. The land, then, is worth $3000 and the capital or improvements upon it $5000. Suppose this farm is leased for $800 a year. Then $500 of this is interest and $300 is rent. The value of land improvements is not rent, but interest, economically speaking.

In order to correctly understand what we are soon to consider it is necessary to fully realize throughout our discussion the exact meaning of the terms 'interest,' 'wages' and 'rent,' as above defined—the part of production that goes to reward capital being interest; that which goes to pay labor being wages; and that which goes to pay for the land or its use being rent. The terms 'interest' and 'wages' are used in a much broader sense in political economy than

is commonly done by some, and 'rent' in a very much restricted sense. Let us, therefore, be sure that no confusion of thought shall prevail respecting these as well as other important terms, or failure to discover the truths we seek must be inevitable.

All the wealth produced in this world is distributed among the three factors which produce it, land, labor and capital, and is designated as rent, wages or interest, according as the one or the other of these obtain the same. Rent, wages and interest secure all values. Values can find no other channels and can go nowhere else, unless disguised; for there is no other element besides these three considered or even fancied in distribution—neither is it possible for another to exist without another or fourth factor of production. It is clearly evident that all wealth is absorbed by rent, wages and interest. The only question is, does each of these obtain its just share, or are there conditions, agencies or influences that cause any of the three to secure too much or too little—is there anything that robs the one for the benefit of either or both of the others?

And here, indeed, is where every reformer declares is the fault of our economic system. In fact, it is most evident that if a fault exists at all it must lie chiefly in the laws of distribution. But how varied and even conflicting are the opinions entertained! Everything seems to be confusion—nay, utter chaos! Men see that the trouble rests in distribution somewhere; but they fail to see what it is, and they fail to see it because they do not search far enough, do not sift to the bottom, do not avoid and escape the hold that custom and established or preconceived theories have upon them, do not take practical views of things, do not rely sufficiently upon plain common-sense and practical facts. Let us, therefore, consider this part of our investigation with especial care, and let us review the entire field covered by it. Let us be slow and sure in reaching conclusions, and let us realize the full import of every fact and

circumstance that may be met; for we are now facing the problem that has baffled mankind for centuries, but which our age is destined to solve.

Probably all men at all times have, to some extent at least, exchanged their products with one another; and as civilization advanced did their systems and methods of exchange become more and more extensive and complex. No nation ever became great or wealthy without vast facilities and the free and general practice of exchange or trade. In fact, other conditions being equal, all nations have always prospered in proportion to the facilities, freedom and extent of their trade — both domestic and foreign. Men can live without exchanging their products; but they can always secure great mutual advantages and become far richer by exchange or trade. He who will not trade must raise his own wheat, grind his own flour, bake his own bread, saw his own lumber, build his own house, manufacture his own furniture, weave his own clothes, make his own shoes, and produce all his own tools — which means that he must forever be a poor wretch. And just so must the nation that obstructs trade with other nations suffer a like result. One country is best adapted to produce grain, while another is fit mainly for the production of metals; one has timber, while another has none; one produces unlimited quantities of fruit, and another cannot produce any. How greatly, therefore, must trade benefit both men and nations.

For this reason, because of our remarkably advanced methods of production, and because of our consequent almost indefinite division and subdivision of labor, has trade become so universal, vast and important that the distribution of wealth is regulated entirely by it and the prices that prevail. Prices regulate the distribution of wealth among rent, wages and interest; but prices are regulated by the laws of supply and demand. The word 'price,' though, is not an absolute, but only a comparative term. The price

of a commodity is its value in comparison with some other commodity taken as a standard. By common consent and common interests the world has selected gold as such standard, whether wisely or not. When we say the price of a commodity is five dollars we mean that it is as valuable as a certain weight of gold; and in exchanging the same the owner will demand either that amount of gold or something as valuable as that amount of gold.

By 'exchange' is meant not only exchanges of commodities for commodities, commodities for coined metals or currency, commodities for personal services, and so forth, but exchange of anything whatever concerning production. Exchange of labor for labor, labor for land, land for capital, capital for labor, etc., no matter in what forms or manner, are all embraced in the meaning of this term. Indeed, one can now rarely find an act of production that is not at the same time also an act of exchange. Practically, as well as theoretically, every production is accompanied by an exchange with its regulating price—that is, the distribution of wealth is determined with its production, distribution being governed by prices in exchange.

But prices are governed by supply and demand. The chief consideration in production always is to engage in whatever enterprise that is most probable to yield the best results, which must tend to cause a maintenance of prices at their normal or comparably proper hight—that is, tend to make all pursuits as nearly equally profitable as possible, providing only that all are equally free to engage in every line of production. Should there be a sudden destruction of a great number of sheep by disease, wool and mutton would become scarce and rise in price accordingly. This would make sheep raising more profitable than other pursuits in general, and where the danger of disease no longer existed an increased number of people would immediately engage in the business until the supply would be equal to the demand—that is, until sheep raising has ceased to be

more profitable than other pursuits generally. However, a greater number having become prepared to raise sheep, there will be a general disposition to stay in the business, so that the supply may soon become even greater than the demand, and the profit be less than in other occupations—which, unless the demand increase, must gradually cause some to engage in something that they find more profitable and promising until the general profit will once more be the average of profits of all industries. Thus we see that if there is equal freedom for all men to employ themselves in the business the reward or profit of the same will naturally be kept, in the most perfect manner possible, on an equality with that of all other forms of production, so that on the whole sheep raisers cannot secure more in distribution for their labor and capital invested than can laborers and capitalists engaged in other occupations, while on the other hand they can obtain just as much. The returns to labor, land and capital employed in the business will be made equal to such returns in all other industries—wages, rent and interest will here absorb as much as and no more than elsewhere—supply and demand here regulate distribution in a most exquisite and just manner, upon which no human law can possibly improve—here freedom is justice.

And just so it is with the production and distribution of every form of wealth when all are equally free to use the natural opportunities of production. Absolute industrial freedom and the natural laws of supply and demand are the perfect and only true regulators of prices or distribution. How can there be an unfair or inequitable distribution of wealth under such conditions? Indeed, not only common sense, but our very instincts or first impressions, would tell us that it is impossible. The fault in our methods of distribution cannot lie in the operations of natural laws or too much freedom, but must lie in the violation of natural law and the hampering or restriction of freedom of production. However, let us be sure; and let us see just where and how

our methods or laws violate these simple, self-evident and fundamental laws of nature in distribution.

Supply and demand not only tend to make rent equal everywhere, wages equal everywhere, and interest equal everywhere; but for the same reason do they cause a just and equitable division among rent, wages and interest. In the first place, if all values of the natural opportunities, or land, find their way into the public treasuries and are used for public purposes there can be no possible wrong or need of apprehensions in this direction, since they are produced by the public, or by all men who work, and therefore must belong to the public, or to all men equally. Even if these land values, which constitute rent, be unnaturally high for any reason, there can be no very serious mischief; for, with but few exceptions, all men pay rent, either directly or indirectly, actively or passively, consciously or unconsciously, and whatever is thus paid will revert to the equal benefit of all. If, when the public secures all rent, there be any robbery there must also be an equal amount devoted to the good of the entire public. But it will subsequently appear most obvious that under such conditions rent can never be too high, and that it must and can rise only naturally and to the equal advantages of all. Let rent go where it justly belongs and there can be no robbery on the part of rent; for rent, like wages and interest, is regulated by supply and demand. Rent must rise or fall exactly as the demand for land shall rise or fall. The demand for land, by the way, can and must rise or fall only as industry or labor increases or decreases; and industry, or the total volume of labor, must increase as population or the power to utilize land increases, but cannot decrease unless population or enterprise and civilization shall decrease. In short, rent rises as progress advances, and can fall only by deterioration and decay. Rent is created by general industry, or by all the people as a whole; and if it be appropriated for the general good of all there can be at least no serious result.

If rent shall go to the public no injustice can arise on the part of rent. But if it goes to private individuals injustice must arise, not only in that the public is robbed of what the public produces, but inasmuch as this must create monopoly in nature's gifts to all, and without which life itself is impossible — and what is still worse, such monopoly impedes industry, lessens the opportunities of labor to use the earth, increases labor competition, and forces wages down to the merest possibility of making a living.

And how is it with labor and capital? Who can claim, or even suppose, that wages obtains too large a share? Such a thing is never thought of, and is, manifestly, impossible; for in labor there exists every possible element that can in any way promote competition, and none that can check the same, which must force wages down whenever occasion requires it. Indeed, observations everywhere most clearly and unmistakably demonstrate the miserable condition of labor. All desire and have long been trying to protect labor—some by taxing labor, but few by extending justice to labor and permitting labor to protect itself. Surely, wages is not the robber. Neither is it interest; for capital and labor are the same thing, and interest and wages should be and are governed by the same natural laws. Money and capital are largely withheld from industry by the same discouraging influences that bar out labor, and it is not only reasonable to infer, but there can be no other conclusion than that interest in itself gets little if any more than wages.

But to make sure of our conclusions let us now briefly trace facts to their real source. We must now see just how our present economic or industrial system operates, what agencies influence prices and distribution under the same, whether such agencies are just or unjust, and what will destroy the latter.

It was observed in the case of the sheep industry how supply and demand regulate prices in the most perfect manner immaginable when competition in production is free and unrestrained. Indeed, it is self-evident that under free competition prices must be forced down to the lowest possible level with prices in general. If, in any form of production, prices should become relatively high (that is, yield a greater profit than do prices in other occupations) an immediate increase of supply and fall in prices would be the inevitable result. On the other hand, if the prices in such business should become relatively low an immediate decrease of supply and rise in prices to the general level of prices would be the result. As demand increases must prices rise; as prices rise must supply increase; as supply increases must prices fall. Prices, therefore, must vary as supply and demand vary, rising as demand increases or as supply decreases, and falling as supply increases or as demand decreases; and, accordingly, supply and demand must maintain prices at their nearest possible relative level, and cause the most equitable distribution of wealth attainable.

What is true of one industry in this respect must be true of every industry. If free competition prevails in the entire industrial world distribution must be equitable and just everywhere. But on the other hand, if competition is in some degree restrained in any form of production there *must* be an inequitable and unjust distribution of wealth to the exact extent of such restraint in the same; because, with competition restrained, with some being barred from engaging in the business, with only a limited number being priviledged or enabled to embark therein, supply cannot increase to the extent that it would if competition were free, prices cannot fall to the relative level with prices in industries that are free, those enabled to pursue such form of production must obtain more for their labor and capital employed than can those in the free industries obtain, and distribution must be inequitable and unfair in the exact

degree that competition is checked. Conditions that check competition anywhere give to some more than to others in distribution, and are, therefore, unjust and require to be remedied. They are the same in effect as robbery, but are worse than robbery inasmuch as their operations cannot be avoided, for against them we cannot guard.

Now, any industry in which competition is checked in any measure gives those engaged in it greater profits than are obtained in other pursuits, and such industry is called a monopoly. A monopoly is a power to obtain something for nothing — a power of one industry to rob other industries — a system of legalized robbery.

Free competition in some industries and monopoly in others must work grave injustice indeed. A just economic system must *entirely* abolish either all monopoly or all competition — the existence of both at the same time must make distribution inequitable, demoralize industry, foster hard times, produce panics, discourage enterprise, promote stagnation, and cause involuntary poverty and crime. If monopoly cannot be abolished, then competition must be abolished. The government must either permit absolute freedom of competition in every form and phase of production, or it must absolutely abolish the same and constitute itself a universal monopoly by assuming the absolute control and ownership of all industries. And here the question arises: 'Can monopoly be abolished, or must the government become a universal monopoly?' Those who advocate the latter plan are called socialists or nationalists; while those who think monopoly can and should be abolished are most appropriately designated 'free traders,' using the term 'free trade' in its full scientific sense, which includes free competition in production everywhere and in every phase, and not in importation alone. But to abolish competition seems like abolishing the very laws of nature; while on the other hand, abolishing monopoly seems like carrying out nature's provisions and following nature's course.

However, let us first see if monopoly really does exist, where it exists, and what causes its existence, when it must soon become evident as to what the true remedy shall be.

In labor there is and can be no monopoly, since every laborer is a free competitor against all other laborers; and it would be folly to suppose that any argument is necessary to prove this fact—it is self-evident that in labor there is perfect freedom of competition, or absolute free trade.

Accordingly, if monopoly does exist, it must exist in either land or capital, or both. No wealth can be produced without land. No labor or capital can be employed without land. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in, *all* must come from land. Without land there can be no production, no work, no wealth. With scarcity of land we must suffer—without it we must die.

Freedom of competition must prevail in land and capital as well as in labor, or labor must be robbed in the exact degree that such competition is checked in the other two factors. With freedom in one factor and monopoly in the others, the former will suffer while the latter get more than their proper share. The factors that are monopolized must get too much and those that are free must get correspondingly too little. Monopoly robs the free.

Let us now see what, if anything, checks the free use of land in production; for any restraint upon the free and equal opportunities of all to use land is certain to create monopoly in land and rob labor. But who denies that there is monopoly in land? Who even doubts it? Why, everyone knows it. However, let us investigate and see how it is caused and how it operates.

When the first settlers entered Missouri the land had no value, although it was as productive as it is now. The farmer who conferred a thousand dollar's worth of capital and labor upon his land could not sell it for a cent more than one thousand dollars. The miner who invested ten thousand dollars in developing his mine could obtain only

that amount for his mine. And so it was with all land—it had no value, whether improved or not—there was no rent. But as localities became somewhat populated the land in the same began to have value—improved and unimproved land alike. And just as population increased did rent, or these land values, increase, until to-day, when farming land is worth from five to fifty dollars an acre, over and above the value of improvements, if any; while city lots and even mining lands are frequently worth hundreds of thousands and sometimes millions of dollars an acre. Yet, rent must continue to increase so long as population or industry may increase, which, under naural conditions, must increase forever. When Missouri's population shall be double what it is now, its rent must also have doubled—and this great state can sustain thirty million more comfortably than it now does three million, when its rent would be ten times what it is at present. Rent, or the value of land, like the value or price of everything else, is regulated by supply and demand; the number of people constitutes the demand and the amount of land the supply. Improvements on land are never included in rent. Rent is no greater when the land is improved than when it is unimproved. To estimate the rent or value of an improved town lot we ascertain the selling price of the ground with improvements, and then subtract the cost or value of the improvements from it; the result being the total or capitalized rent value. And to ascertain the price we add the value of the improvements to the rent. Of course, by saying that population, or the people as a whole, creates rent, we mean industrious people or industry; and industry or improvements on any particular piece of ground cannot give to such ground any more value than it gives to neighboring land or land in general. Thus, while it is really industry or labor that produces rent, industry can produce it only in a general way. Every man who works produces rent, whether he owns land or not; and no man who does not work can by any possibility produce

rent. But in no manner can industry create rent in any particular area of ground alone—industry must affect all surrounding lands in general just as much as that on which it is conferred. Improvement values and land values are two different things, and only the latter constitute rent. The rent of our vacant lands owned by foreign land lords increases just as much as does the rent of our improved lands owned by Americans. Land owners create no more rent per individual than do all other individuals, so that much the greater part of the rent is created by those who own no land, while less than one-half of the total rent can be attributed to the industry of land owners; for, certainly the great majority of the people own no land. And this is assuming that land owners are as industrious as other people, which is not the case, for wealthy land owners can and often do live and get rich without working or pursuing any legitimate occupation. Yet, while the owners of land create much less than one-half the rent, they take all the rent. All this is true without exception, and is evident to everyone. Neither can there be any question concerning the injustice of letting a few take the rent, which is the product of all; and the only excuse for doing so is that the land owners pay taxes on their land—which excuse would be valid and sufficient indeed, if only such taxes which they pay to the public be equal to the rent which the public gives them; no less can be just; no more can be asked.

But the injustice of giving land owners the rent without an equivalent is not half realized until we observe the demoralizing effects that this system has upon enterprise. Mr. Smith has long owned a coal mine worth thousands of dollars; yet, he never found it policy to develop the same, although during all this time people needed and paid high prices for coal, and unemployed laborers were anxious and begging for work at the lowest of wages. Under the system of giving rent to private individuals (and only to the few who own land) he found it more profitable to leave his

mine undeveloped. Finally he concluded to develop and work it; but in doing so he was at once called upon to pay a heavy fine, the same to be increased from year to year, just as he might increase the mine's capacity and yield. Of course, Mr. Smith found no encouragement in these fines for improving the mine; but on the contrary, in being permitted to pocket or get the benefit of the rent, as well as escaping such taxes by leaving the mine undeveloped, and avoiding the possible risks connected with the business, he not only finds no inducements for working the mine at all, but does find considerable discouragement. But this is not all, for an additional fine is also imposed every year on all that his mine might yield. And the fact that these fines are called 'taxes' alters their effects no more than would calling them 'protection.' They are fines just the same, and, no matter what they be called, Mr. Smith will supply the market with less coal than he would if they were not imposed, the tendency of which must be to raise the price of coal and give fewer laborers employment, or, what is the same thing, to cause an unequal distribution of wealth in consequence of the increased labor competition and corresponding fall in wages. It is clear that the effects of this system of taxation must be to retard production and deprive labor of employment. It is evident that so far as Mr. Smith figures as a producer of coal it works directly and only so that the opportunities of labor will be less; that there will be less competition in the production of coal and more in the awful struggle of labor to secure employment; that the price of coal will be higher and wages lower; that people will obtain less for their labor and pay more for what they must buy; that labor is not only robbed by rent, but that labor is even barred from the use of land and forced into idleness.

Suppose Mr. Smith was taxed for neither developing and improving his mine, nor for what the same might yield him. Would this not be a greater inducement for him to work the mine than to fine him a few hundred or thousand dollars in taxes, as we do now? And again, suppose Mr. Smith were obliged to return annually to the public all the values that the public creates in his mine — the rent — then he could not continue to own the mine without utilizing it to the fullest extent that the demand for its use requires; that is, to such extent which will yield him at least the rent, along with a legitimate profit on his labor conferred and capital invested, which can always be done, since rent cannot rise higher than the point at which existing conditions of industry will permit the same. At present he is permitted to get the benefit of or pocket the rent — the product of the public — and thus becomes rich by owning the mine without using it or giving labor employment; while under the plan proposed he would, as he should, find himself obliged to utilize it or sell or lease it to those who can and desire to do so.

We see, therefore, that abolishing all taxes upon Mr. Smith's industry will remove a burden from his industry, and that the acquisition by the public of all the rent — what the public creates — would not only place him in a position where he must work the mine or make terms with those who are anxious to do so, but it would do him no injustice, since he parts with nothing that he has produced in any sense whatever — he only returns to the public what the public has created in his land (the rent) which justly belongs to the public, and should be taken by the public and used for public purposes.

While under our present system his mine has been unused for many years, and is as yet only half used,

it is most clearly evident that under the system suggested the same would have been properly utilized from the very beginning, or when there appeared the first demand for or value in it, and would have been improved and worked more and more from year to year, just as such demand or value increased; in which case more laborers would have obtained employment, and labor competition would have operated downward and wages upward.

These are very vital points, and must be properly understood and appreciated. They are both clear and strong respecting the instance of Mr. Smith just given, and seem of trifling significance only when our thoughts extend no further than this one instance alone. But let us think. Let us attribute the little importance of Mr. Smith's industry to the industry of all men. Then we will at once see the supreme significance of the principle involved. If this plan would force Smith's coal mine into the fullest use, give more laborers employment, diminish labor competition and tend to raise wages accordingly, it would for the same reason force every other coal mine, and every mine of any kind whatever, into thorough use, and produce the same results. And if this plan would affect all the mines of the country in this manner, it would affect all agricultural land and all village and town lots in the same manner. It would put the *entire* earth, wherever this system prevailed, into thorough use, and leave no natural opportunity, for which prevailing industrial conditions give the slighest demand or value, out of use. Is it not as manifest as anything can possibly be, that, since it would put the earth, or all the land, into thorough use, and make the whole world a perfect bee-hive of industry and enterprise, it would afford all men opportunities to obtain employment at all times without begging for the same; would reduce labor

competition to the very lowest, and raise wages to the very highest consistent point; and would, accordingly, give to labor all that labor has ever asked, or ever dare ask, namely, liberty to use the earth to earn a living. All this seems so plain and self-evident that the only wonder should be that any arguments are deemed necessary to reveal the same. It involves not only the most elementary and fundamental principle of economics, but it is so simple and obvious that a child could readily perceive it as an axiomatic truth if his mind were not perverted by the foolish current doctrines and practices of industry, or influenced by partisan prejudices.

Taxing industry or the products of industry discourages industry; and permitting private individuals who own the land to appropriate or pocket the rent, which the public creates, enables and encourages them to hold lands unused for purely speculative purposes, while labor must suffer not only from a lack of opportunities to find employment, but from low wages caused by the increased labor competition occasioned thereby. On the other hand, leaving all industry and products of industry untaxed does not discourage industry; and prohibiting the owners of land from appropriating or obtaining the benefit of the rent obliges them to thoroughly utilize the land, which will diminish labor competition by enabling all to obtain employment at all times, and in addition raise wages accordingly; thus, leaving to individuals what justly belongs to individuals, and to the public what justly belongs to the public, and at the same time doing injustice to nobody — and taxing nobody; for the total rent values of all the lands of any country will amply pay all possible public expenses of all possible kinds.

But private appropriation of rent not only makes it profitable for landowners to leave their lands un-

used, but it enables and makes it profitable for them to form land syndicates or combines in order to force lands already in use out of use; because by so doing they can still further lessen production and raise prices accordingly. Mr. Smith owns his coal mine absolutely —just as he owns his clothes that he wears or the house that he lives in. This part of the earth is his, and no man dare touch or use it without his consent. Under our present system he is not obliged to use it or let others use it, even though his fellow men may actually die from lack of opportunities to do so. Over this portion of the earth he possesses an absolute monopoly indeed.

Now, what is true of Mr. Smith's mine is true of every other mine, of every farm, of every town or city lot, and of every spot of the earth's surface, wherever this system prevails. Every landowner has now an absolute monopoly over his own land—so far, it is self-evident, there is monopoly in land.

We see that Mr. Smith can absolutely control, limit, or stop production in his mine; and the same is true of all other owners of coal mining lands. And coal mining lands being limited, and Mr. Smith having become wealthy from the rent of his lands—the product of his fellowmen — goes to work and buys up all the coal mines he can and stops production in them, thereby not only raising the price of coal, but increasing labor competition or the demand for the use of the mines, which in turn increases their value or rent, of which he alone at present secures the benefit. In other words, our laws now operate so that by stopping production he is benefitted both in higher prices of coal and in higher rent, while labor is injured both in securing less employment and in obtaining lower wages when employment is obtained, because of the greater labor competition.

The lands of greatest value are always owned by wealthy men or corporations, who find it easy to form trusts or syndicates for the purpose of limiting production still more effectively.

Yes, and we all know that to-day the most valuable coal mines are controlled by combines and trusts. The same is true of lands from which petroleum and many other products are obtained; and it is possible and in a measure true of all lands, for all kinds of land are limited in extent, and *no* kinds of land can be produced by man. The lands that are most difficult to be controlled by combines are agricultural lands, these being most widely distributed and of largest extent, although of least rental value, for that very reason —for the reason that they are less capable of being monopolized.

Thus we see how private appropriation of rent permits and has resulted in a monstrous system of land monopoly, which not only robs labor, but leaves laborers to suffer and even to die, because they cannot use their own "dear native land" to earn a living! We see, then, that there is monopoly in land. We have also seen that public appropriation of rent would force all lands into thorough use and thus destroy land monopoly absolutely.

There cannot be monopoly in labor; but it is clearly evident that there is and must be monopoly in land under our present land system. Capital, being only a form of labor, or labor already exerted, could not be monopolized any more than labor itself if labor and land were only free to produce it. But since labor is largely checked in production by land monopoly, it is made possible for those who own the land to monopolize not only the very earth itself, but all that the earth brings forth.

Since capital can be produced only by labor

applied to land, the power to keep land out of use must, of course, result in checking or limiting the production of capital. And since holding land out of use also causes low wages, laborers get only enough to make a living, while the land owners and capitalists get the balance—that is, accumulated capital goes to rent and interest—to landowners and capitalists, who constitute only a small portion of the total population.

Since holding land out of use not only limits the production of capital, but concentrates it in the hands of a few, it becomes possible for these few to combine and form trusts for the purpose of withholding capital and money from use and circulation in order to raise prices, or the profits of their capital, which is interest. Accordingly, the few men of the country who are absorbing the mass of the country's wealth have in some degree acquired the power of monopolizing some of the products of labor, such as petroleum, coal, gold, silver, etc., and sometimes even productions so widely diffused as the articles of the farms and factories.

However, capitalists can seldom succeed in cornering the products of labor, even under our present system, without first acquiring the ownership of the lands from which they are obtained. The methods they must pursue are to first buy up most or all of these valuable lands, so that they may be able to regulate production in order to regulate prices and rob labor. And this is the way it is always done; wherever capital is monopolized the land from which the same is obtained is monopolized by such capitalists. Monopoly in capital can exist only through monopoly in land, and is, therefore nothing but land monopoly in reality.

Wherever production is unchecked or unlimited there exists and can exist no monopoly in capital; and

if the same does exist where production is checked, it certainly must instantly cease when production is made free.

Accordingly, let us make monopoly in land an impossibility, and monopoly in capital will be an even greater impossibility. Let public appropriation of rent be substituted for private appropriation of rent, and production will enormously increase; labor competition will at once diminish and wages rise; wealth will be equitably distributed and no longer concentrated in the hands of a few; and the power to monopolize capital, or the products of labor, must become an utter impossibility, except where the exclusive right to produce an article is given by patent laws to the inventor of the same, which laws might perhaps also be so modified as to permit no monopoly even there.

Let us suppose the production of sewing machines to be absolutely free and unchecked. Should capital, even when concentrated as it is at present, attempt to buy up all the machines in the market to monopolize them and raise their prices, their production would at once become more profitable than is the production of other commodities in general, and industry would immediately turn to the same, and in an exceedingly short time increase the supply to the extent that will secure it no greater profit than will other occupations secure. And this would go on and on just as long as capital might continue the struggle, even until half the population should be engaged in the manufacture of sewing machines, if capital could hold out so long. And even then, it is evident that under free production such an attempt on the part of capital could not demoralize labor even perceptibly, but would waste and destroy itself; because it could not deprive labor of labor's just reward, since labor will then be free to produce the machines all the world over, and will

have thereby only opened up for it increased opportunities, which must tend to raise wages. On the other hand such a struggle could not secure to capital any advantage, since the prompt and indefinite increase of the production of sewing machines would keep their prices down at the level of prices in general. Under free production it could not be otherwise, even when capital is concentrated, which it could not be under the system of public appropriation of rent. Now, what is true of sewing machines must be true of all the countless commodities produced by labor. It must be true even of the precious metals and all other metals. Under free production gold and silver could be monopolized only with the greatest difficulty and only to a small extent, even when capital is concentrated as at present, and not at all when capital shall have ceased to be concentrated, as it would cease in less than a generation after public appropriation of rent shall have been established.

No, the products of labor can not be monopolized if labor is given free access to land—if labor be free to produce the same. But land can be monopolized; for land is limited in amount, and cannot be produced by man—the earth is so large, and no human ingenuity can add a square inch to it. There must be monopoly in land when the few are permitted to own all the resources of the earth—all the powers and opportunities that enable labor to produce the necessaries of life—and the many obliged to depend for existence upon the terms that the former can exact for the blessed privilege of using and living in God's creation. Land is limited in extent. Man cannot make it, and cannot live without it. Hence, checking labor in the use of land must create monopoly in land. If we could produce land as we can capital, then monopoly in land would be an utter impossibility—it would be as im-

possible as is monopoly in capital impossible under free production. Land monopoly exists only because land is limited and all its powers and opportunities are granted by law to only a portion of mankind. If the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the sunshine we enjoy were limited, or could be bottled-up or appropriated, there would be monopoly in the same if treated as land is treated now; and we should soon find people choking for want of air, thirsting for the want of water, and dying for the want of sunshine. Thus it is that the world is full of people to-day who drudge in poverty and meet with premature deaths, because they are deprived by law of the equal right to use an essential element of nature, the land.

## THE MISTAKE AND THE REMEDY.

We have now ascertained in this brief space that there exists no monopoly in labor, and that monopoly in capital can and does exist only as a result of monopoly in land. Our present land system is a huge system of monopoly, from which alone spring all the monopolies that exist in capital.

There is no mistaking the fact that free production in all industries will produce the most equitable distribution of wealth attainable, that it is monopoly alone which causes distribution to be inequitable or unfair, and that the remedy therefore must be the abolition of monopoly. The problem is to abolish this system of monopoly; and the remedy is FREEDOM—free production—universal free trade—and this can be secured only by substituting public appropriation of rent for private appropriation of rent, and abolishing all taxes on the products of industry.

We look about us—and everywhere do we see able and honest men and women seeking and begging for the privilege to work—for an opportunity to earn a living—and yet many of them cannot find the same, but are forced to beg or driven to crime and shame. Yes, the very curse of God, that man must live by the sweat of his brow, has been transformed into a blessing—how glad men are to obtain opportunities to toil and sweat for the privilege of living—living even on the brink of despair. As a result of these economic conditions we have not only poverty among the

masses, but ignorance and immorality among all. Nature is not niggardly. This world is a world of opportunities to satisfy the wants of man; and to even suppose that it could be otherwise would seem like blaspheming our Creator. No, the mistake is not in nature. It is, as we have already observed, the mistake of man —and a stupendous mistake it is indeed. Private appropriation of rent — the product of general industry —is a mistake that no words can describe, no mind conceive. It has not only caused generations of misery, ignorance, degradation and despair, but has practically perverted human nature and moral perceptions. It is the mistake of all mistakes — the crime of all crimes.

Yes, we see prosperity and enormous wealth; inventions, progress, and grandeur; literature, art and science; schools colleges, and universities. But who get the benefits of these — only the few; for the masses there is no hope but the hope of escaping poverty and want. There is prosperity for the few, but destitution for the many.

Private appropriation of rent produces monopoly, and monopoly, as we have seen, is the curse of the earth — the awful nightmare of civilization. But if private appropriation of rent produces monopoly, then public appropriation of rent must destroy it. This is not only a natural inference, but it has been clearly demonstrated that such would be the result. And as to the justice of making this change it need only be said that it consists of nothing but stopping wrong and establishing right in two ways, namely: It is wrong to permit a few to keep what is produced by all. Therefore, rent should not go into the pockets of landowners, for landowners do not produce it; but it should be taken by and used for the public, because it is the creation of the public. And on the other hand it is

wrong to take from individuals what they do produce, and therefore entirely proper to abolish our entire tax system.

*The remedy* is extremely simple and absolutely just to all and unjust to none. It consists of two things, namely:

First, the abolition of all taxes.

Second, public acquisition of all rents.

To do the second would involve a comparatively small expense and hardly any difficulty whatever, since everyone knows the approximate values of any lands in his neighborhood—far better than he knows the values of the improvements upon them. Rent values need not be assessed every year, and quite likely not oftener than once in five years, except in cities and mining districts. To do the first would abolish perjury, because oaths would not be required, and there could be no fraud because nothing needs be secreted. Inequalities of taxation and the shifting of taxes upon consumers would be impossible, for there would be no taxes to pay; while hundreds of millions of dollars would be saved annually to the public, which is now paid for levying and collecting taxes, since there would be no taxes to levy or collect.

This simple change would greatly simplify government; for the most perplexing, distressing and corrupt feature of government is the taxation feature, which would be entirely abolished. And in substituting public for private appropriation of rent, all the corruption, fraud, and bribery in conferring land grants and franchises would be impossible, for there would be none to give. The cost of collecting the land values would be merely nominal, and all other laws and regulations could remain as they are now. At all events, the secure and permanent possession of, and the right to transfer and inherit land must be maintained just as

they are now; and no limit as to the amount of land anyone shall be permitted to use should be required. Let all select whatever land, and as much land as they please, just as they do now. All that should be required is that every landowner pay annually to the public all that the public creates in his land, namely, the rent, or value of the ground, excluding the improvements.

What the effect of this change would be has been observed. It would set society and industry on a firm basis, which would enable everyone to work out his own salvation and make an easy and independent living; because all would enjoy equal opportunities, and would, therefore, obtain according to their real abilities, industry and enterprise; and no one could become rich without acquiring his wealth in a legitimate or just manner, by his own efforts and industry.

Further than this the government should not go to solve the social problem. Let all men enjoy and be protected in their equal rights to the use of the earth and to make life happy — that is all.

The application of this remedy can be very easily achieved. The history of social reforms is mainly a history of social evolution. Step by step, is the way society must advance. It is only in exceptional cases that sudden social disturbances or revolutions have changed social systems at a blow. The law of human progress is evolution — advance by degrees. And thus only can and must this great reform be achieved. When the time comes when a majority of the people shall have learned of this remedy an attempt will be made to legislate in this direction. The first measures that can be enacted will in no probability be anything more than a mere step — the mere initiation of the principle.

The beginning may be made in Congress, or even

in a city or county government. But no matter where the same shall occur, it is quite manifest that it will be only a beginning.

If Congress makes the first attempt, the same will in all probability be just about what has been done by the fifty-third Congress with the income tax — an attempt to make a small reduction in other taxes and raise that amount by the former. The first law Congress would probably make would be to cut off perhaps 25 per cent. of regular taxes and raise that amount of revenue by collecting 25 per cent. of the rent of all lands that yield rent. If after a few years' trial the plan proves advantageous an amendment may be made to collect 50 per cent. of all rent, and reduce taxes in proportion. Still later *all* rent would be absorbed by the governments (county, city, state and national) and all taxes abolished. The same method would be pursued by a state, or municipality.

Of course when all rent is ultimately absorbed by the public the same would have to be divided equitably between the State and Federal governments.

This change could do not even apparent injustice to anyone, save those who own land, and who constitute less than half the population. But of these the great majority own lands of comparatively small value, or have their lands mortgaged for all or nearly all that they are worth; and consequently these could not be disadvantageously affected by the introduction of the remedy, while, in the meantime, they would receive all the benefits that others obtained. Accordingly, the farmers and owners of suburban homes, even when their grounds are unincumbered, would not only sustain no loss but would derive the greatest benefits.

The only persons who could be imagined to be injured are those very few who own valuable city and mining grounds. And presuming even that these

would be losers by the change, one thing is certain, they have been receiving so much of the wealth which society creates that they can now afford to stop living upon the labor of their fellowmen—they are now sufficiently benefited to be enabled to live a long time upon what they have already acquired by the industry of others, and ought to be obliged to depend upon their own enterprise in the future.

But the truth is that even these few who own the great bulk of the earth's most valuable lands would not lose much if anything. They are the men who know what is going on in economic discussions, and will be the first to see that the remedy will be applied, when they will at once begin to sell their lands to those who stand ready to buy and properly use the same—and there will be ample time to sell before the change is effected, or even commenced. And on the other hand, a moment's reflection will show how that taxes on the improvements and other capital invested and produced upon thoroughly utilized ground is, on the average, equal to what the rent would be under the new system—in fact it often approaches the rent even now—so that even the owners of valuable lands would not lose anything whatever if they will only put their lands to thorough use—and they should under do circumstances be permitted not to do so. No, there is no injustice to anyone in making this great reform; the whole affair is merely a matter of equal justice to all.

The man who makes thorough use of his land will pay no more in rent than he pays now in taxes of all kinds, direct and indirect, while the farmers and owners of other lands of little value will pay far less, since when all land is brought into thorough use there will not be any monopoly in land, and rent, or the value of land, must be much lower.

But suppose rent to remain as high as it is at present, the owners of farms and improved suburban grounds would even then pay less rent than they pay now in taxes. Statistics unmistakably prove this. Take Missouri for an instance. Two cities of this state contain nearly one-third of the entire population and nearly one-half the entire rent or land values of the state. Taking the rent of these two cities alone and the rent or values of the mining lands, and the same will amount to far more than half of all the rents of the entire state. Hence, we see that St. Louis, Kansas City and the mining lands would pay over half of all the revenue of the entire state, while now the farmers pay the bulk of the taxes.

Furthermore, the owners of much of the most valuable ground in St. Louis and Kansas City live in the East or even in Europe, having little or no other interests here, and yet escape with mere nominal taxes, such grounds being largely unimproved. At present, instead of taxing foreign landlords, we tax our industrious people who must pay the rent created by their own industry to such landlords before they are permitted to be industrious.

What is true of Missouri is true of the country in general. The injustice of our present tax systems is surpassed only by the injustice of private appropriation of rent. Both must be abolished, and rent must go where it belongs, namely, into the public treasuries, and then used for public purposes. A simpler and more wholesome reform than this would be is not recorded in history.

This method of raising revenue would increase the burdens of nobody, but would diminish the same for all — even for the industrious landlords. It would create free competition in the use of land, which would force all land into *thorough* use and thus destroy

land monopoly, and with it all other monopoly. It would make this a world of industry and enterprise, afford all employment at all times, reduce labor competition and raise wages, enable all to make a comfortable and independent living, and make of men happier and better beings.

## HOW IT WILL WORK.

The truth and justice of this remedy and the efficacious results it would produce are only too simple and self-apparent for some 'educated' people to readily grasp; for so-called educated people, even more than so-called uneducated people, find it difficult at times to see what stands plainly in view, or to comprehend a fact that is not shrouded in mystery — sometimes we cannot see a mountain because we are searching for a mote.

But clear and evident as this principle must be to every reflecting and unbiased mind, it is, nevertheless, true that in order to clearly perceive and thoroughly comprehend the workings of this system it is very important to form somewhat clear and definite ideas respecting social and industrial laws. Much of the confusion of thought upon economic subjects is due to the fact that we are too much accustomed to regard current theories and established institutions instead of our own plain common-sense — we are too ready to ignore first and self-evident principles, and base our reasonings largely or entirely upon the authority of others or the established order of things. If we are to acquire real and definite convictions we *must* follow facts, not fashion — truth first, custom last.

Space permits of no further discussion. Neither is the same necessary; for it is sufficient to know, what is most truly self-evident, indeed, that public appro-

priation of rent will and *must* cause *all* natural opportunities to be thoroughly used — used to the exact extent that labor may require, by the natural law of labor competition. Labor competition is nothing but competition for the use of land — the natural powers to produce wealth — and as this competition increases with the growth of population and improvements in the methods and means of production, so *must* the use and value of the land increase. And it is equally evident that if *all* natural opportunities be used to the *full* requirments of labor at all times, there *must* be work enough for all at all times and at the highest consistent wages. Public appropriation of rent must put the world into thorough use; the thorough utilization of the earth, must afford all employment at all times; giving all employment must reduce labor competition to a minimum; reducing labor competition to a minimum must raise wages to a maximum; raising wages to a maximum must cause the distribution of the world's production of wealth to be equitable; and equitable distribution must give sufficient wealth to all and underserved wealth to none, give the hardest workers the finest homes and greatest riches, afford all equal chances to prosperity and fame, place all mankind on a general equality socially and eventually obliterate sects and classes, produce a real brotherhood of man, make all happy, and put an end to crime. Equality of rights to the use and enjoyment of nature's bounties must be the first and chief object of government to secure; yet, this is the one great thing government does not do; and the results are what we see them to be—poverty, crime and shame.

We need not trouble ourselves about what the prices of iron, lead, wheat, wool or rice may be; how the currency will effect this or that industry; or what would become of certain occupations or established

institutions. It is enough to know that all men will be *equal in fact* as well as in theory, and that all men will have full and free opportunities to develop all their faculties and apply all their mental and physical powers. It does not matter if the poor shall become as rich as the rich, or the low as high as the high — it is all the better so. It is better to have all men rich than to have only a few rich, and to have all men cultured than to have only a few whom circumstances may lead to eminence. The greatest curse of mankind is inequality; the greatest blessing is equality. Let us establish equality of rights in the use of nature and the enjoyment of the advantages afforded by the general improvements and progress of society, and we shall have little to fear from any possible emergency.

The enormous increase of wealth that the world would then produce would be equitably distributed, no matter what wages or the prices of goods might be in dollars and cents; for certain it is that when labor shall obtain all that it produces, and nothing can be taken by monopoly, capitalists can secure no more than the value of their capital — in addition to what they receive for their own labor — and distribution *must* be just and fair. And this being true, it is manifest that even with only the wealth at present produced the average laborer would not need to work more than three to four hours a day in order to make a comfortable living — and labor would then be respected, for laborers would then be the wealthiest people and would constitute the 'nobility,' if such a thing could then exist. Even now there is wealth enough for all; but while some have millions others have mites. We have over-production now, because labor is robbed, leaving the masses with barely enough to sustain life and health, and with little or nothing to purchase the enormous accumulations of the few.

With employment and fair wages secured by labor the masses will soon have acquired the means to satisfy their universal desire to purchase or secure all that industry can produce, and over-production will be impossible.

There never can be over-production when all are enabled to obtain work and secure the full value of their labor. When wealth is equitably distributed such a thing as over-production must be an utter impossibility; for there is practically no limit to the amount that people can and will consume. Let production be increased twenty-fold, and under free competition the people will and must have obtained the means to secure and the desire to consume all. One hundred dollars a year may supply a man with clothing; but a thousand dollars will do the same more satisfactorily. A family can live in a one thousand dollar house; but a million dollar mansion would be far more desirable. One teacher can instruct fifty pupils; but one teacher or fifty teachers for each pupil would be far better. And so it goes. Under our present system we have over-production; and yet, people are in great want and distress. With public appropriation of rent production may increase indefinitely, but there can never be over-production; for people will then have the means to buy all that can be produced. People would then secure all they might produce, and they would not produce what they would not want. At present the few get most of what the many produce, and the former must hoard what latter cannot buy.

One cry of labor to-day is that labor-saving machinery injures labor—that every improvement in the methods of production is a curse to the masses. And it not only seems so, but on the whole it is so—it is so decause our stupid industrial system makes it so. At present improvements and inventions do injure

labor, and if the same could be brought to a degree of perfection which required no labor, laborers would be forced to steal or starve. But this is so only because nature has been made private property — because monopoly gets what society creates, and at the same time bars labor from the use of the earth, the gift to all. Abolish this system by establishing public appropriation of rent, and all the benefits of labor-saving inventions must and can only go to labor — to those who use or apply the same. Establishing justice will be certain to convert this curse into a blessing.

## INEQUALITY OF TAXATION.

It is easy to see the great injustice of our present tax system; but it is impossible to imagine any tax system that is just. It is an undisputed law of taxation that taxes affect prices. And what does this mean? It must and can only mean that the taxes are in fact paid by the last buyers of the things that are taxed. When the United States government taxed matches the prices of the same were high; and when this tax was abolished the prices immediately became low. When sugar was taxed by the tariff laws it cost ten cents a pound; when the tariff was abolished on the same it cost five cents a pound.

It matters not what kind of tax it be; every tax must raise the price of the thing taxed, and the entire burden of this increased price must and can fall only upon the last buyer—the consumer. The man who first pays the tax is thereby put to that amount of additional expense in producing the article taxed and putting it on the market, and must, therefore, raise the price accordingly, if he is to receive his legitimate reward for his industry, which he would otherwise find profitable to abandon. He raises the price not only the amount of the tax, but adds a profit on this extra

expense. The man who buys and again sells this article must also make a legitimate profit or abandon the business; and hence, he also adds to the price not only the amount of the tax, but *two* profits — one on the tax and the other on the first profit. The next man who buys and again sells it adds *three* profits in addition to the original tax — one on the tax, one on the first profit, and another on the second profit. And the man who buys and sells it the third time adds *four* profits, and so on. But the man who buys it the last time — who buys it to keep, or to consume — can get back neither tax nor the several profits — he must pay it all and bear the *entire* burden. It is clear that the consumer pays the tax, along with the several profits accumulated on account of it.

What is true of one commodity is and must be universally true — the exceptions are not worth mentioning. This is the manifest, acknowledged, and universally admitted law of taxation — that the consumers must bear the burdens of all taxes. But this is not all. Every tax impedes production, and must tend to produce monopoly. And in cases of very high taxes, such as protective tariff taxes, the very object of which is to advance prices, by barring out competition — or, in other words, to create monopoly — the consumers find themselves charged with a proportionately large monopoly advance in price, in addition to the advance of the tax itself, with all the accumulated profits upon both. All these items taken together must and do cause not only a very material increase in price, but in instances of high taxes make prices almost fabulous. Thus we see how burdensome such taxes become; how they fall entirely upon consumers; and how stupid and unjust they are.

This being true, and most manifestly true, what is the sense of taxing men for their industry? Why not tax

consumers directly, since they must by this system bear the burdens of not only the taxes with their accumulated profits, but of monopoly. Is it not preposterously absurd to endeavor to equitably distribute the burdens of taxation by such a system, when it is known in advance that the consumers must bear the burdens? Is it not absurd—nay, a crime—to levy such taxes at all?

Of all taxes, the least unjust is the income tax; but even this is wrong; for it takes from men the results of their own enterprise, and at the same time discourages enterprise, and must so far tend to increase labor competition and reduce wages. All taxes are unjust, not to mention all the perjury, fraud, corruption and expense connected therewith. Let the public take what the public creates—the rent—and no taxes will be needed, no injustice done, and no burdens imposed.

The worst taxes are protective tariff taxes. These are imposed for the *ostensible* purpose of raising prices, thereby largely increasing the profits of a few and the burdens of many. In all essential respects protective tariffs work precisely like all other taxes—they fall upon consumers, discourage industry, and impede enterprise, not to mention the frauds and enormous expense in collecting the same, and the horrible corruption funds sent to Congress whenever a tariff law is to be altered, abolishsd or enacted. They do not create industry, but lessen industry, in attempting to divert industry from more remunerative to less remunerative occupations. How in the name of commonsense can an in itself burdensome tax make profitable an industry that is not profitable under natural conditions? It is the very height of stupidity to suppose the same. If we can secure goods cheaper by importation than by producing them here it is well; if we

could secure them by importation for a mere trifle it would be better; and if we could secure them in this manner for nothing it would be best of all. The cheaper we can obtain what we want, the better it is — it makes no difference whether we produce the same here, or whether we exchange for it something else that we produce here. Free importation could not injure us; for nothing can be imported except what we take in exchange for our own production, and by so doing we only obtain more for a given amount of labor than we could otherwise obtain. The idea that free importation could cripple or injure our industries is most preposterously absurd and ridiculous — there is utterly no sense in it ; it is the merest folly. Taxing trade or industry must lessen industry, and making industry free must enlarge it, no matter in what department or phase.

The idea that a nation can exchange home productions with foreigners without taking the equivalent in foreign productions is a great delusion. And it is well that the same is a delusion. If we as a nation should, in exporting our goods, receive nothing but money for the same we would be at a sad disadvantage, indeed; for money is of utterly no use to us except as a medium of exchange — the medium that makes exchanges rapid and easy — and if we were obliged to part every year with hundreds of millions of dollars worth of our labor for the mere purpose of facilitating exchange, obtaining therefor nothing to satisfy our personal wants and provide for our comforts, we would be in a lamentable quandary, indeed. We cannot eat money; we cannot clothe ourselves with it; and we cannot use it for shelter or any other purpose. Of course we can 'buy' things with it. But we must buy things produced either at home or abroad. If we buy home products with the money obtained for our exports, we

as a nation, have still nothing but money for our labor that we exchanged for it. The money merely circulates, or passes from hand to hand, but as a nation we obtain *no wealth* thereby. The only way we, as a nation, can secure wealth with this money is to *buy it abroad.* And if we buy it abroad the money *must* again return abroad; so that the whole matter amounts to nothing, after all, but an exchange of our goods for an equivalent amount of foreign goods. Exchanges are and must be equal on the average, no matter if they take place between persons of different nations or between persons of the same nation — money being nothing but the medium through which exchanges are made.

We cannot export more wealth than we import, unless we have debts to pay abroad, or presents to give our foreign friends; and in such event *we must* be the losers of the entire difference between our imports and exports. If, on the other hand, we import more than we export, it can be so only because foreigners have debts to pay or gifts to present to Americans, in which case we must be the gainers of the difference or 'balance of trade.' That nation is more benefitted by trade which imports more than it exports, other things being equal. The delusion that the opposite can be true is transcendent ignorance, a survival of the past, and lives only by the erroneous assumption that newly developed countries, whose exports usually exceed the imports, are most prosperous. But newly developed countries are least prosperous on the whole. They produce less wealth per capita than older communities, other things being equal; and what makes them seem more prosperous is the fact that monopoly is less prevalent, because the natural opportunities are relatively more abundant and easier of access, which produces a more equitable distribution, lessens concen-

tration, and enables all to make a comfortable living —because it enables fewer to make fortunes off the industry of others. The reason why the exports of new countries generally exceed their imports is that such countries have more rent to pay to foreign landlords and extend more aid gratuitously to foreign relatives and friends—there is no other reason. Yet, it is true that in new communities, with production relatively less than in older communities, the masses are really more prosperous, and the fact that they export more than they import rather only proves this. But it does not follow that therefore an excess of exports over imports *makes* prosperity or is a gain—it is a total loss.

It is not money, but wealth, that we all really desire. We want money only because we can obtain wealth with it. And if we can secure only money for our exports, and are to secure no wealth from abroad with it, we are in every sense the losers of all that we gave for the same—as much so as if we had cast our goods into the sea—for there is nothing needful returned, since we do not need to waste our labor in order to secure or maintain a sufficient volume of the currency. We do not depend upon the foreign world for our currency. We have more than our share of the world's gold and silver, and everything else that is required for a circulating medium. An absurd delusion, indeed, is the notion that an excess of exports over imports is to our advantage. The very idea that such a thing could be possible is ridiculous in the extreme. What we should seek is to get more than we give, and not to give more than we get, unless it behooves us to be charitable with our foreign brothers.

Another most stupid and mischievous tax is the license tax. Taxing men for the occupations they pursue does great harm—it discourages some and in

effect prohibits many from entering the same, and so far must foster monopoly. Our liquor license system is a gigantic crime—and that too from every standpoint of view. It effectually prohibits the masses of the people from engaging in the largest industry in the country—for the masses are too poor to pay a license of hundreds of dollars. This puts the enormous liquor industry in the hands of the more wealthy elements, makes respectable the most evil-producing occupation of mankind, makes drinking popular, encourages drunkenness and vice, and creates one of the greatest systems of monopoly in existence. Drinking liquor either is or is not a crime. If it is, then the liquor traffic is a crime; if it is not, then the liquor traffic is not a crime. If the liquor traffic is a crime it should be abolished, root and branch; if not it should be let alone. I can see no crime in moderate drinking, although I believe it is better not to drink intoxicants at all. And if it is no crime to drink liquor it can be no crime to manufacture or sell it. Hence, in my opinion, the liquor business should be made free. Let every person who so desires make or sell liquor free and unmolested. Let liquor be sold in every grocery, bakery, store and shop. Let it be peddled from door to door. It is the best solution of the liquor problem—and it is the easiest. It will make whiskey so cheap that 'the rich would not buy it,' and make drink so unpopular that 'the poor would not drink it.' Abolish all taxes on liquor, and the liquor problem is solved. Abolish all other taxes, and the entire tax problem is solved. Establish public appropriation of rent, and the social problem is solved.

And the social evolution must come to this, or it must come to socialism or something worse. The spirit of reform is abroad; come what must, but something must come. The toiling masses have begun to

think; they are seeking a remedy; the clans are gathering; ideas are forming and crystalizing; gradually but surely some definite line of action will be followed, and duty calls upon every true citizen to extend all the aid in his power towards giving proper direction to this line. To ward off possible evils or approaching calamities that might occur through popular ignorance, plutocratic provocation, or blind leadership, is what should most concern the true patriot now. Some great change is certain to come. Let us do all we can to make the change a just one.

There are two opposite trends of ideas among the reform elements; one toward freedom, and the other toward restriction of freedom; one seeks to ultimately have government operate and control all industries, and the other is to make all industries absolutely free and have no governmental interference in the same whatever; the one is *socialism*, and the other is *real free trade*. It seems clear to me that ultimately the choice must be between these two ideas — socialism or freedom. As for me, I do not believe in socialism. I believe in the opposite plan—in LIBERTY. I believe that the greatest curse of society is the fact that we have too much socialism now, and that the real problem is how to abolish what we already have. While universal socialism would probably be an improvement upon one-sided socialism, as we have at present, it is not the true remedy. However, socialists can and will consistently join us in establishing public appropriation of rent, for rent is public wealth, and they dare not oppose a measure that demands public appropriation of what the public creates, when they advocate public appropriation of *all* wealth. But beyond this step we would have to expect the greatest opposition to universal industrial freedom, or free trade, from the socialists; for they are seeking to make the gov-

ernment a universal monopoly, while we are seeking to destroy *all* monopoly. But most fortunately we shall have no further step to take after they have assisted us in establishing public appropriation of rent; for our object will then have been wholely accomplished—we shall then have nothing to do but to oppose, if need be, every attempt at socialism. However, if public appropriation of rent should then prove wanting, no injury will have been done their cause; and if it proves successful they will no longer desire their scheme, and socialism will be dead. But unless this plan is adopted nothing can prevent the ultimate materialization of socialism. Friends of liberty may be aware of this. The outcome will be socialism or something worse, unless justice intervenes. True conservatism and intelligent opposition to the socialistic scheme demands hasty action in setting things aright. To blindly denounce and ridicule socialists will only help their cause. If we would abolish socialism, allay discontent, instill patriotism, and ward off possible anarchistic outrages, we *must* seek to do justice—to remove the cause that gives rise to threatening evils. Let the brave join the ranks and fight the great battle of peace.

The path to victory is the ballot, a political party is the instrument, and now is the time. For over thirty years the federal government was continuously controlled by one political party, and the country has become the land of monopoly and the home of the poor. During all those years the democratic party denounced and charged all existing evils to the party in power, and promised to do great things if the democracy were given a chance. But the democracy received no chance until she was bold enough to declare protection a fraud and promised to abolish the same. Then she gained a sweeping victory — but only to break her

promise, and meet with a duly deserved and crushing defeat. Two years ago the party that stood for protection was routed and demoralized. To-day the party that promised but failed to abolish protection is practically dead. There is but one hope left for the democratic party, namely, to adopt Jeffersonian principles, rid itself of the plutocratic gang that has been permitted to control it and direct its actions, and take a bold stand for complete and genuine reform. Will the democracy do this? If not, then a new party will fill her place.

The immediate future must determine this. The thinking elements cannot be held in party lines much longer; they are gradually but surely closing the ranks, and will at no distant day stand shoulder to shoulder in defense of truth and justice instead of parties and party fanaticism. With free trade as our platform we can compel the democratic party to carry our banner to victory or be swept from the field by the very forces that now constitute her strength. And it seems that this must happen—that the coming contest must be between industrial freedom and industrial restriction, between equity and monopoly, between justice and robbery, between progress and stagnation—it matters not what the platforms of the parties may be. If both of the old parties should ignore or endeavor to ignore this question the progressive elements will desert them quickly and hasten to unite in any movement that shall afford an opportunity for real progress. Such action, or inaction, on the part of the old parties is just what will give to a new party movement an impetus that is certain to carry it on to easy victory; the time has come when some party must stand for industrial freedom, when something that amounts to something must be done for the desperate and helpless millions who cannot

secure employment, even by begging and pleading for the same, and who get only enough to make a wretched living when kind providence permits them to earn the same by all the hardships involved.

Party fanaticism and prejudices are rapidly dying out, and people are beginning to consider principles without regard to parties. They have learned that parties are merely machines with which to attain their objects, and that it is policy to vote with whatever party that holds out fair hopes and is pledged to principles tending toward their views. There is and can be no such thing as a good party or a bad party. Parties only stand for certain principles — unless they are mere organizations of office-seekers and their beneficiaries. There is utterly no need of parties except for the establishment and maintenance of principles. The time has come when people are beginning to see this and stand ready to vote with any party having reasonable chances of success, if the same represents their side of political issues. Hence the breaking loose from the old parties is becoming easier every year, and is certain to develop into a formidable third party organization at no distant day, if neither of the old parties takes up the cause of genuine and wholesome reform.

The blind conservatism that has so long characterized the old parties — which amounts to ultra radicalism against reform — must give way to progressive ideas. The people are tired and sick of it, and demand a wholesome change. The fear of old party friends that a liberal step forward would scare people is founded partly on ignorance and partly on inherited indisposition. The people are not the fools that these kinds of statesmen imagine them to be. If either of the old party leaders were to come out boldly for real reform nothing on earth could prevent their party

from achieving a most sweeping victory. Reform is easy if the leaders will only lead, but difficult if they will run; their courage will encourage those who follow them, while their cowardice will dishearten their followers. But the continued cowardice of politicians has taught people to follow less and think more; and the time when the masses will trust to no leaders is near at hand. Then there is hope. Then we shall have government by the people in fact, as well as in theory. Then truth will be in the ascendency, and justice will prevail.

## THE RAILROADS.

With the taxation question settled, and public appropriation of rent established, other problems may be in order, and will be more easily disposed of.

One of the great proplems of the country is the railroad problem, to which a passing notice may be given. I do not believe that the government should engage in any form of industry—not even the industry of railroading. But I do believe that the land belongs to the people—to *all* the people—and that all values which the public creates in the same should go to and be used for the public. When this is done ground will have no selling value over and above what the improvements are worth.

The grounds occupied by railroads afford enormous advantages and enable industry to make enormous fortunes in conveying or transporting commodities over them. They are exceedingly valuable, and when these values find their way into the public coffers the selling values of the road-beds will have disappeared. Then the government should purchase the improvements or tracks upon these grounds or road-beds, along with the station-houses and depots, and keep them in repair, and charge toll from all companies or

persons who desire to run trains over the same — these tolls to be just high enough to insure sufficient revenue to the government to pay all expenses for keeping the roads in proper condition. The telegraphs and telephones should also be secured and operated by the government.

In this way the government will have nothing to do with the railroad business except to give out the contracts to the lowest bidders for placing and keeping the roads and depots in safe and proper repair, charging tolls for trains, fixing the time-schedules for departure and arrival of trains, and operating the telegraphs. This would be simple enough, and could easily be done by the government, as it would leave all carrying of goods, conducting train services, fixing freight and transportation rates, manufacture and equipment of cars and engines, etc., in the hands of private enterprise. The government would permit all to run engines and trains on any road for any distance at the very lowest possible charge.

This would afford absolute freedom of competition on every mile of railroad track. Everyone who could secure an engine could, if he desired, carry his own produce from Maine to California, or from the Dakotas to Florida. And this perfect freedom of competition to transport and exchange goods would bring rates down to the very lowest profitable point. Any attempt to keep rates up would be immediately foiled by the increase of competition that would be sure to follow on account of the greater profits afforded, which would force the rates down to their proper level.

At present every railroad is an absolute monopoly so far as its now line is concerned ;since only a single corporation has the priviledge of using the same. The plan here suggested would allow millions of corporations or individuals to use the same at mere nomi-

nal rates, and would thus absolutely destroy monopoly in railroading, which is all that is needed or desirable.

After the ground values of the roads are taken by the public, which creates the same, their purchase value will consist of only the value of the tracks and other improvements, which the government can easily enough secure by degrees. And if corporations insist upon unreasonable prices the government can and should construct competing lines.

## THE CURRENCY.

The money question is not only interesting and important, but is being extensively discussed. The many various and conflicting views entertained show how little it is understood, and how valuable a true, definite comprehension of the same on the part of the people would be. The confusion upon this subject arises mainly from the fact that people differ in the meaning they attach to the term 'money,' or from the fact that they partially or wholly disregard the real or essential object of money,

When money first came into use it consisted of certain products of labor which could be most easily transported and preserved, so as to make exchanges easy and safe. The precious metals, of course, possessed these qualities of mobility and preservation in a greater degree than any other commodities, and, by tacit consent, gradually took the place of other and more awkward goods. The only idea then attached to money was that it consisted of wealth used for successive and continued exchanges for the mere purpose of facilitating the exchanges of other forms of wealth. Exchangeable wealth was the money of the past.

But when credits became customary a new kind of money was established. A man would write out a note promising to pay a certain amount of wealth, and

this note could be transferred — one, two, twenty or a thousand times — for wealth among people who had confidence that the giver of the note would pay the amount of wealth stipulated. Such a note would serve every purpose of facilitating exchanges if people were certain that the same would be fully and duly paid. This is credit money — the money of the future.

At present we have two, and only two, kinds of money. One is exchangeable wealth, or government coins of gold, silver, nickel and copper; the other is credits, or corporation and government notes and certificates, etc. Our national bank notes and government notes and gold and silver certificates are all credits. Bonds are also credits and would serve every purpose of money if they were freely exchanged or intended and adapted for the same. In fact our government bonds do afford a circulating medium, though in a round-about way, in our national bank notes, the most satisfactory money in circulation. The choice in the money question is between exchangeable wealth and credits; between coin money and credit money; between barbaric money and civilized money.

As civilization advances, a better system of money than the old becomes most indispensible, and the choice must ultimately be for the credit system. The use of coins for money must gradually grow in disfavor, and will, at no distant day, be practically abandoned.

But a still greater problem presents itself — the problem of which is the best system of credit money. Shall it be government legal-tender notes, or another system? This is one of the two great problems in the money question, and only when it is properly solved will the coinage system be abandoned.

The reason why metals or other forms of wealth are unsatisfactory for money is that they are inconvenient and fluctuate in value, besides affording not a

single advantage over credit money, and at the same time depriving mankind of many advantages that their use in manufactures and the arts would afford. The real injustice, however, in the use of the precious metals as money lies in the fact that they are practically the only products of labor that are in a large degree limited in productive increase, and, therefore, enable the great capitalists to combine in hoarding up or cornering enough of the currency to make it scarce and increase its value. This done they again put it on the market at these increased values and rob industry of an enormous amount of wealth. So long as precious metals are used as money civilized society is certain to be continuously robbed, especially if wealth continues to be concentrated.

But even if no special money interests should exist the metals would be undesirable on account of their fluctuating capabilities; for any money that varies in value must work injustice; and it is a gross delusion to suppose that the precious metals vary in value less than other commodities. They do vary in value constantly, and the only reason why we seem unconscious of the fact is that we are accustomed to compare the values of all other commodities with them, assuming, unreasonably so, that all variations are on the part of the things compared. Of late there has occurred a wide variation between silver and gold; but it does not necessarily follow that gold remained stationary in value, while silver dropped, any more than that silver remained stationary, while gold went up. The truth is that gold has been cornered and silver left on the market, and that gold went up as well as silver went down.

Now, in ascertaining the best system of money the first thing in order is to ascertain what the standard of value shall be. Money is of no use to society, save

as a *measure*, as well as a guarantee, of value. And there can be no measure of value or anything else save by the selection of a certain definite standard. In the measure of extension the yard is the standard; feet and inches are fractional parts, and rods and miles are multiples of it. Just so must we have a standard in measuring values. The standard of value is called 'dollar,' and, like the yard, should be an absolutely ascertainable and unvariable quantity. But this it is not, and it is impossible to make it so. The best that can be done is to approximate the same. Our present standard of value is a certain weight of gold of a certain fineness—a very poor standard, indeed; for the same must vary with every variation in the market value of gold, which is as much subject to variation as are most other commodities, and more so than is silver, because the world has less of it and its possibilities of monoply are correspondingly greater. No one metal or other form of wealth can possibly constitute a good standard of value; and the idea that two metals can be circulated successfully as money with the standard based on only one of them is most unreasonable, not to say absurd. No matter what the law may designate as the standard, custom will adopt another if such a foolish thing is persisted in. The law says that a certain weight of gold is the unit or standard of value, and that a certain weight of silver is also the standard. This is simply absurd. It simply establishes *two* standards, and custom must adopt the one or the other — whichever conditions and policy may determine.

The intrinsic value of the present silver dollar is only a little over half the value of the standard or gold dollar. If the two are to circulate equally in exchanges silver must evidently become more profitable than gold as a circulating medium, and more sil-

ver will be placed upon the mints, while gold will be withheld. If the mints turn out as much purchase power with 60 cents worth of silver as they will with 100 cents worth of gold it is most evident that the possessors of silver will rush to the mints with their silver, and that the possessors of gold will be indifferent or refrain from doing so. And as silver increases and gold decreases in circulation, so must the tendency be more and more toward the adoption of the silver dollar as the standard; and when this point is reached silver will flow freely and gold will disappear from circulation. The only reason why this result has not been brought about is because silver coinage was limited. But even under such regulations the tendency has been towards the adoption by custom of silver as the standard instead of gold. It is because this point has almost been approached that our financial troubles have occurred, and are likely to continue for some time.

If gold and silver are to circulate together successfully the standard of value must be based upon the two metals — it must be an equal value of each. This would not only keep them more nearly at par, but it would make a better standard, because such a standard would be less liable to fluctuate, since if one metal might rise the other would be as likely to fall; and if one falls as much as the other rises the standard will not be affected at all. But a far better standard still would be one based upon a larger number of the more widely diffused metals, and perhaps also of other commodities. This is easily done. Let the law name the commodities and determine the fineness and weight of each that is to constitute a part of the standard — an equal value of each being taken. It is not necessary that they should be all combined in one coin or coined at all. Let all coinage of metals be abandoned

and a proper system of credit money adopted, based upon such a standard. All that is required is a determinate amount and fineness of each of the selected commodities, when the exact value of the standard can at all times be definitely ascertained.

One objection that may be urged against a mixed standard is that it is difficult to compare its value with that of other commodities. But this is not true. It is as easy to compare the value of any commodity with the value of nickel, platinum, or any other form of wealth, as it is to compare the same with the value of gold or silver. The only difference is that it requires several comparisons between two commodities instead of only one — one for each commodity upon which the standard is based — from which the exact value can be determined. The latter is no more difficult than the former; it only requires a little more calculation, and this cannot be an objection of any serious significance. Besides, after the public shall have become familiar with and accustomed to such a standard the value of the same will be estimated just as that of any single form of wealth, since the compound of the several forms composing it will be so well and universally understood that it will be regarded as a single commodity or form of wealth, just as is done with the countless familiar compounds found upon the markets everywhere.

This would secure a standard of value that would fluctuate less than any other obtainable; for, while some commodities upon which it is based might rise in value others would in all probability fall, since it is not probable, or even possible, that all could rise or fall at the same time. Thus, there might be much fluctuation in such commodities without affecting the standard materially or at all. And then, with a proper system of credit money based upon such a standard

the currency question would be settled.

After a proper standard is selected, the remaining problem will be to determine the best system of credits. And I believe that if we were not accustomed to our present money system, and were to entertain no preconceived notions upon the money question, this would be a reasonably easy and simple task.

Credits of private individuals or corporatoins are not available as universal money, unless the government guarantees their payment. But how can the government guarantee the payment of anything unless the government really owns wealth enough to actually pay it, in case of necessity. No system of credits can serve as a desirable medium of exchange unless it is government credit. But government credits are worthless unless the government possesses the ability to actually pay every dollar put in circulation.

This can be done only in a manner similar to that by which our national bank notes are placed in circulation. Our national bank notes are substantially government notes given for gold loaned to the government. They are nominally bank notes, because the banks issue them, but they are really government notes, because the government provides for their issuance and guarantees their payment—on account of value received by the government.

Now, if the government can authorize banks to issue notes and guarantee their payment it can certainly just as well issue such notes itself. And if the government can issue notes upon the security of gold, which is devoted to the payment of debts, it can certainly far more safely issue notes upon the security of other forms of wealth which is not to be expended by the government in the payment of debts.

Accordingly, if the government will issue its notes at *all* times upon *all* forms of wealth that will

afford satisfactory security, when the same is offered to the government for that purpose, the circulating medium can be increased in volume almost indefinitely, and every dollar will be absolutely secured by *actual* wealth. Surely, there is no way imaginable by which a safer and greater volume of the currency can be floated, and these are the two vital objects to be obtained. Every citizen who owns any form of wealth that is capable of affording appropriate security can go to the government and borrow money upon the same — the government giving him its notes, and he pledging his wealth to the government as security until such notes are returned to the government. Such notes should constitute the only kind of currency. They would in most instances, of course, have to be issued for short intervals of time, and when returned they would be re-issued, just as is now done with our paper money.

The rate of interest would, of course, tend to reach the very lowest possible point under this plan; for the greatest possible volume of money can be circulated. But the government should charge the very highest average rate of interest paid on capital or general wealth; since if it did otherwise the very rich would obtain an enormous advantage over those who could borrow only small amounts. If interest on such government loans were to be lower than interest on capital or general wealth, then those possessing great fortunes would certainly derive proportionally greater benefits than those who own less; while those possessing little or no wealth at all could borrow little or nothing and receive little or no benefit, but would be injured indirectly — injured by the advantage given to the rich. The rate must be kept as high as the rate on capital or great injustice is sure to be done. What is required is to bring interest on money

down to the very lowest level with interest on capital; and this method of circulating money is certain to do that if anything can do so. But for the government to loan money at a lower rate of interest than what is charged for the use of capital would be a crime against the very class that deserves to be favored if favors are proper at all.

There can never be a contraction of the currency under this system if the rate of interest on money is made equal at all times to the prevailing rate on capital; since the slightest scarcity of money would tend to make the interest on money higher than that on capital—that is, it would cause money to be in greater demand — and there would immediately be an increase of borrowers, which would bring the demand for money down to a level with the demand for capital. And this level is the mark which would limit the volume of circulation, for any increase of the currency above this mark could be of no advantage to society. Society needs only enough money to effect the exchanges of the markets; and this amount is certain to be kept in circulation if the rate of interest on money is maintained at the level of interest on capital.

This affords a natural and appropriate limit for the volume of the currency, without the intervention of any act of Congress or any regulation whatever — the volume of the circulating medium will regulate itself, and will do so in the most perfect manner. Contraction will be impossible, and inflation could do no harm if it were possible; for, no matter how much money is put in circulation, if every dollar is backed by security pledged to the government it cannot depreciate or create any disturbance in trade.

The kinds and amounts of capital or wealth upon which loans can safely be made must of course be ascertained by law; and experience will soon indicate

what is best in this respect. The same is true respecting the treatment of those who may violate the laws regulating government loans. Retribution for disposing of wealth pledged as security, for instance, must necessarily be rather severe, just as in case of counterfeiting. But there are certainly no serious obstacles in the way of successfully guarding against any possible emergencies.

Besides the evil of a fluctuating standard, our present money system is, and always must be, deficient in the volume of the circulation; and this would be thoroughly remedied by this plan. Instead of a circulation of $2,000,000,000 we probably could have over $20,000,000,000. And such a medium could never be cornered by the money interests as can be and is done with our present currency. Such a currency could not be materially contracted; for the moment a contraction were felt there would be an increase of borrowers, which would promptly increase the circulation to the required limit. But if it could be cornered no advantages could accrue to those engaged in such an attempt, for the same could not in any way affect the standard or unit of value, and borrowers could still get money of the government at the normal rate, above which private enterprise could not possibly loan any money.

The question as to the manner in which the government should issue its notes now presents itself. It may seem objectionable, too, that the government should engage in the money loaning business —even for the purpose of providing a suitable currency.

However, the financial interests are purely public interests — as much so as are the postal and railway interests — and if this system of money is the proper one it is indispensible that the government should become a money loaning institution, since this is the

only practicable method of securing a circulation for such a currency.

To do this the government should connect with every postoffice a purely national bank of money issue and deposit, abolishing all national features of other banks, which should be left to do all banking business as strictly private corporations. This would convenience the entire public and make deposits absolutely safe — something that is in itself to be very much desired. Furthermore, the interest charged on notes issued by the government would doubtless more than pay all the expenses of the government in operating such a system of banks and money. The whole institution would be self-supporting.

In times of peace such money must evidently be absolutely safe, as well as flexible and self-regulating; because the government credit is supported by actual wealth pledged to it for every dollar issued. In times of war it must for the same reason be the safest currency conceivable; for hiding and hoarding it — as is always done upon such occasions with the precious metals — can afford no possible advantages, since it possesses no intrinsic value. It would circulate as freely in war as in peace.

## CONCLUSION.

Important as are the money and railway questions, neither can afford a real or wholesome remedy. The remedy lies in the land question — in the question whether all men or only a few shall own the gifts of nature; whether rent shall go to landlords, or to the public, which creates it. Whatever else may be in order and essential, this is certainly the first and most fundamental economic arrangement that must be properly provided for. No matter what financial and railway systems may be established, so long as the earth is monopolized must labor find it difficult to secure employment and impossible to obtain fair wages; and this is just what must be accomplished. The problem is to open the fields of industry — to permit labor to use the world, which must immediately raise wages to the highest consistent point and cause an equitable distribution of the results of industry, no matter what money is used or how the railways are operated.

Already over 20,000,000 acres of very valuable American lands are owned by landlords of Great Britain alone; and their 'free' American tenants are compelled to pay them millions of dollars annually for the privilege of using and living in their own 'dear native land.' Millions of dollars every year we must

pay to foreign landlords for the blessed privilege of earning a living. How stupid we 'free' Americans are! to pay foreigners, who do nothing to produce our wealth, such enormous bounties — we might as well cast our millions into the sea; and the sea is just as much entitled to the same.

Under our present land system and laws all our lands might be owned by foreigners, who, without ever touching the wheels of industry, would drain this beautiful land, the veriest paradise of the globe, of the bulk of all wealth that we might be permitted by such landlords to produce. We 'free' Americans would evidently be nothing more than their humble slaves.

But what would be the difference if these landlords were to live in London or in New York, on this side or on the other side of the ocean? Practically nothing. Landlords can be no more instrumental in producing wealth or creating rent by living in idleness here than they can be by living in idleness across the sea; and hence, they are in neither case entitled to one cent of such wealth or rent. The only thing that can be said in favor of resident landlords is that they will spend their money here — as though that were a sufficient reason why landlords should get what others produce. But what advantage is there in having landlords spend their money here? Only this: that we will have the pleasure of feeding them. Money is spent or invested where it affords the greatest opportunities; and it matters not where men who possess it live. The money obtained from us by landlords will be invested wherever it may find the greatest demand or secure the highest returns — and it takes but a few days to ship money across the Atlantic, and but a few hours or minutes to effect an investment in the most distant portions of the globe. It does not mean that because

money is paid here it remains here. But whether it does or not, industry is not only robbed of so much of its results, but is demoralized by the obstructions thus thrown in its course. Money flows and seeks its level, just like water. We could not stop it if we would.

No, it differs not whether landlords live abroad or in our midst; whether they are foreigners or Americans; whether they constitute a million individuals or only one person. Industry must pay the rent and suffer just the same.

And, ah! how terrible to contemplate that we toiling Americans must pay annually billions of dollars for the privilege of toiling, and to enable our landlords to spend our money for us in our own country! But even all this could be endured if it did not reduce and degrade labor, the noblest attribute of man, into misery and disgrace—nay, if it did not produce involuntary destitution, want, crime, and death!

Who can view these conditions, which all must see if they would or not, and then deny the possibility of some terrible injustice? He who cannot see that a great wrong exists must be blinder than a bat; he who has no faith in the application of any just remedy must, in his heart, be a blasphemer of the Creator; and he who will shrink from enlisting his attention in the search for such a remedy must be an intellectual and moral coward.

We talk about Christianizing the world; but we cannot succeed until we begin at the proper place. If we would transport goods across the sea, we must first build a ship; and if we would climb to heaven we must first construct a ladder. If we would make men good we must first *enable* them to be good. Instead of denying them the use of the earth and thereby forcing them into idleness, destitution and crime, we must open up the fields of labor, from which they are barred by the

monopoly created by our laws, and by which they are robbed when access to opportunities is granted them. We must enable all men to make an honest living, and fewer will engage in the occupations of swindling, stealing and gambling. We must abolish the laws that tempt and drive men into evil ways, before we can hope to see them honest and true. Let us establish a just economic system, so that no one will be forced into want, but can at all times make at least a comfortable living, and the Christianization of man will be easy and rapid.

The true teacher of religion and ethics must lay his foundation and begin to build here; for the laws that govern society are of greater consequence than the theories of creeds. If the clergy of the world would devote a tithe of their energies in this direction they would do far more good for the religion of Jesus than they do in teaching and preaching theories alone. This is Christianity; it is practical Christianity — the only Christianity that counts for much.

It is not only the duty of the churches to protest against the terrible crime of private appropriation of rent, but they commit no less a crime when they countenance and fail to protest against the same. To countenance wrong is no better than doing wrong, and there can be no alternative for the churches, if they are to serve the purpose of moral institutions.

Monopoly is the chief cause of crime, the principal obstruction to progress, and the awful curse of this otherwise magnificent world. It makes millionaires of idlers, and tramps of industrious toilers. It checks prosperity, and produces panics and hard-times. It debases human intellect and human character, and perverts human nature. It is the great fountain-head of nearly all that is low, vulgar and mean. We pray, and have prayed for centuries, 'Thy kingdom come on

*earth* as it is in heaven.' Is this the kingdom of our prayer? a world of beggars and tramps? If it is, it is a veritable hell indeed, and it behooves us to pray for a better kingdom, or with greater faith, and to act as well as pray. But how often do we hear people say this prayer, and in the very next breath, if they are approached upon the subject, say this state of things cannot be avoided. In church they profess to believe that their prayers will be answered; but in their hearts they have no faith. Let us have faith.

The struggle for this reform is not only begun, but is already far on the way. Thinking people the world over are giving it their serious attention; and the ablest of statesmen are championing the great cause. Enlisted in the movement are people of all classes, from orthodox to infidel, from millionaire to beggar, from monopolist to wage-earner, and even from landlord to tenant. This is no class movement. It is the movement of mankind for a truer and higher order of social justice. It is the movement of equal rights to all and a brotherhood of man.

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## PREFACE.

In its earlier abridged form this address was given as a Phi Beta Kappa oration at Brown University, and, as a lecture, at New York, Boston, New Haven, Ann Arbor, and elsewhere. In that form, substantially, it was published in THE POPULAR SCIENCE MONTHLY. I have now given it careful revision, correcting some errors, and extending it largely by presenting new facts and developing various points of interest in the general discussion. Among the subjects added or rewrought are, in Astronomy, the struggle of Galileo and the retreat of the Church after its victory; in Chemistry and Physics, the compromise between Science and Theology made by Thomas Aquinas, and the unfortunate route taken by Science in consequence; in Anatomy and Medicine, the earlier growth of ecclesiastical distrust of these sciences; in Scientific Education, the dealings of various European universities with scientific studies; in Political and Social Science, a more complete statement of the opposition of the Church, on Scriptural grounds, to the taking of interest for money; and in the conclusion, a more careful summing up. If I have seemed to encumber the text with notes, it has been in the intention to leave no important assertion unsupported; and in the hope that others—less engrossed with administrative care than myself—may find in them indications for more extended studies in various parts of the struggles which I have but sketched. $1.00

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